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RICHARD T. HOLBROOK

MASTER PIERRE PATELIN

PQ
1573
A55
1914
MAIN

ARCE IN THREE ACTS

Walter H. Baker Company, Boston

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Master Pierre Patelin

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Maistre pierre pathelin

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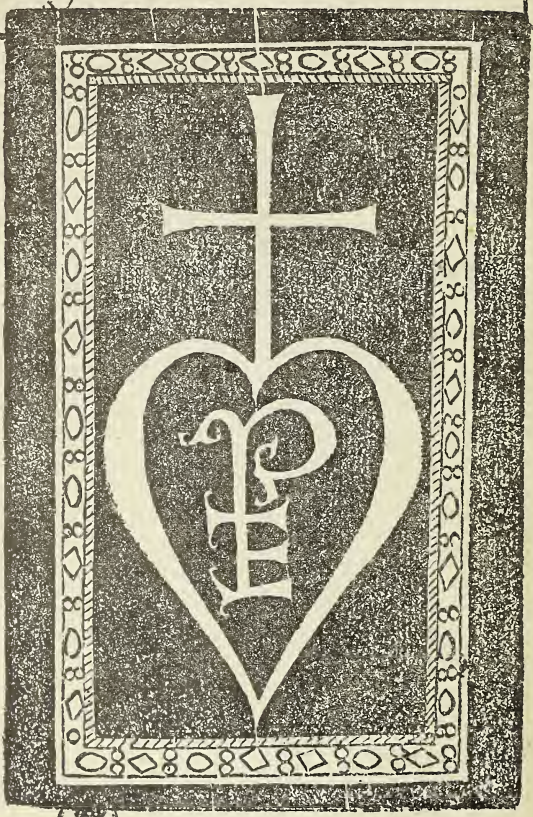

B.R

The emblem of Pierre Levet

Maistre Pierre Pathelin
HQ
1573
.A55
1914

Master Pierre Patelin

A Farce in Three Acts

Composed anonymously about 1464 A. D.

Englished by

RICHARD T. HOLBROOK, Ph. D.

POPULAR EDITION
Illustrated

NOTE

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BOSTON
WALTER H. BAKER & CO.

Master Pierre Patelin

CHARACTERS

PIERRE PATELIN, *the Lawyer; husband to Guillemette; tall, lean, clean-shaven, lantern-jawed. Aged about forty-five.*

GUILLAUME JOCEAULME, *the Draper; clean-shaven, with a round stolid face; a short and graceless figure. Aged about thirty-five.*

TIBALT LAMBKIN, *the Shepherd; clean-shaven, with a face as stupid as a sheep's except when lighted by an expression of guile; of an unimposing stature, hair long and unkempt, sunburnt. Aged about eighteen.*

THE JUDGE; *pompous, clean-shaven. Aged between forty and fifty.*

JUDGE'S CLERK; ARCHERS; BAILIFFS, *carrying short staves;* LOITERERS.

GUILLEMETTE, *Wife to Pierre Patelin. Aged about thirty.*

THE FIRST ACT.—In Pierre Patelin's House and at the Draper's Shop.

THE SECOND ACT.—The Same.

THE THIRD ACT.—At the Judge's Seat.

[See Publisher's Note on Scenery, Costumes, Properties, and Diagrams of the Stage Setting]

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PEOPLE OF THE PLAY

(As originally produced in its present form at the Bellevue-Stratford, in Philadelphia, on April 24, 1914, and later, May 4, at the Little Theatre, Philadelphia.)

MASTER PIERRE PATELIN, *Lawyer* . . .	*Mr. William H. Whitney.*
GUILLEMETTE, *his Wife* . .	*Miss Rosamond Hoyt.*
GUILLAUME JOCEAULME, *the Draper* . . .	*Mr. J. Bennett Colesberry.*
TIBALT LAMBKIN, *the Shepherd* . . .	*Mr. Francis J. MacBeath, Jr.*
THE JUDGE . . .	*Mr. Henry C. Sheppard.*

The Street Crowd is represented by members of the "Plays and Players" club

THE FIRST ACT.—In the Market-place.
THE SECOND ACT.—Patelin's Dwelling.
THE THIRD ACT.—The Market-place again.

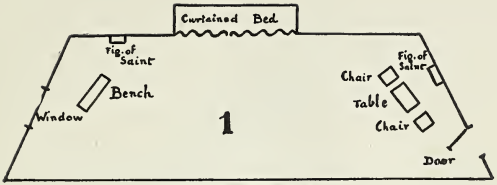
TIME.—Fifteenth Century.

STAGE DIRECTORS . . . { *Mrs. C. Yarnall Abbott.* / *Mr. Henry C. Sheppard.*

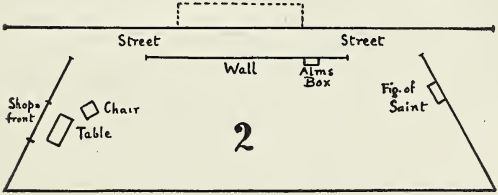
Scenery and Costumes after Boutet de Monvel's etchings for *Patelin* and his coloured illustrations for *Jeanne d'Arc.*

93401

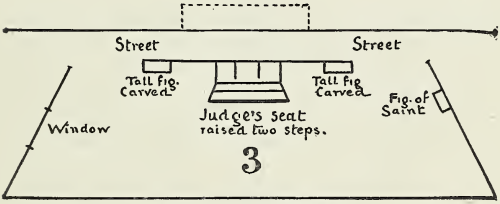
To
W. S. B.



PATELIN'S HOUSE.



DRAPER'S SHOP.
In the Market Place



THE JUDGE'S SEAT.
In the Market Place

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Note

It is my privilege to announce that within the last few days, and coincidently with the performance at the Bellevue-Stratford, my friend and colleague, Louis Cons, Licencié de l'Université de Paris, after some months of research, has identified the hitherto unknown author of "Maître Pierre Pathelin" as Guillaume Alécis, "*le bon moine*," author of "Le Blason de Faulses Amours." M. Cons's monograph on this subject will be published at an early date.

R. T. H.

Bryn Mawr, Penna.,
April 24, 1914.

Publisher's Note

THE scenery may be of the simplest. A few large screens, decorated or not, according to taste or circumstances, enclose the stage at the back and sides, the sides sloping slightly toward the back, as in the diagrams. In the centre of the back is a large opening into a recess which contains the bed. This opening is covered by curtains which can be drawn back. In the centre of the screen at the right of the stage is a broad shutter, hinged at the top, and arranged to be drawn up by means of a pulley. When this is closed its outward side is painted to represent a window; when it has been drawn up so as to project from the wall it becomes the wooden awning to the open shop-front below. Whenever the action passes in

PATELIN'S HOUSE

this window is closed; the bed with its curtains appears at the back, there is an entrance used down left, and the furniture is disposed as in Diagram 1. When the action passes in

THE DRAPER'S SHOP

the aperture at the back is concealed by another

screen set a few feet in front of it, as in the Diagram 2, the shutter of the window at the right is raised, and the entrance at the left is not used. The disposition of this scene is indicated in Diagram 2. When the action is transferred to

THE MARKET-PLACE

the shutter of the window is again lowered, a small dais for the Judge's seat is placed in front of the screen that covers the window at back, and the furniture disposed as in Diagram 3. The stage settings are thus seen to consist merely of the shuffling of a few simple properties, after the manner of a pack of cards. They can be arranged very easily and rapidly behind the Tableau Curtains which are drawn for that purpose.

The PROPERTIES needed for this arrangement are two figures of saints, carved or painted, on pedestals; an alms-box; a table; two chairs; a mirror; a broom; a bench; steps for the Judge's seat; a few rolls of cloth, one of them blue, another "grey or green"; a bedstead, a mattress, etc. The furniture should be Gothic, or heavy and plain.

The STAGE SETTING might be made more picturesque by a "drop" and two "wings,"

reproducing the important features in the etchings by Boutet de Monvel. One side of the "drop" could represent the background of the bedroom scenes; the other side could represent the background required for the rest. The side-wings could also be reversible, so as to represent either the Interior or the Street Scenes, the Draper's Shop, etc., as described.

The first scene of Act I can occur in the Market-Place, where Patelin and Guillemette simply emerge from a crowd of early marketers who quietly disappear while Patelin and Guillemette are exchanging their first words.

The COSTUMES can be made up from the etchings by Boutet de Monvel, which are used to illustrate the edition of *La Farce de Maître Pathelin*, published in three forms by Libraire Ch. Delagrave, 15 Rue Soufflot, Paris, at two, ten and forty francs respectively, or from Levet's woodcuts (see the List of Illustrations). It is not necessary to be too precise as to fashion or colour; but students or costumers who desire accurate and detailed information on these two points will find it in Boutet de Monvel's illustrations of his *Jeanne d'Arc*, published by E. Plon, Nourrit & Cie., 10 rue Garancière, Paris.

Preface

ALL that I have to say at present of *Patelin* as a work of literature will be found in the Introduction or in the Notes on the Text. It is not amiss therefore to make here certain remarks of a technical nature.

This translation was made chiefly from the oldest known edition of *Patelin*, printed by Guillaume Le Roy[1] at Lyons, about 1486. About November, 1489,[2] Le Roy's *Patelin* was faithfully reprinted, with six excellent illustrative woodcuts, by Pierre Levet, a celebrated Parisian printer and publisher whose emblem (accurately reproduced from his *Patelin*) serves as our frontispiece. Of Levet's *Patelin*, also, only one exemplar is now believed to exist. This book, preserved

[1] Of which the only known exemplar now belongs to M. Albert Rosset of Lyons, France.

[2] See my essay on "*Patelin* in the Oldest Known Editions," in *Modern Language Notes* for March, 1906. It was partly by means of the cracks in Levet's emblem that I was enabled to determine, without erring by more than a month, the date of Levet's edition.

at the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris, is a beautiful specimen of early printing, and is fortunately genuine throughout. I say "fortunately" because nine pages have at some indefinite period been lost from the older *Patelin* by Le Roy. These are now replaced by pen-and-ink counterfeits, derived from Levet and Beneaut (1490), and executed so skilfully as almost to escape detection.

From the fifteenth century only one manuscript has come down. As this manuscript was copied (directly) from Levet's text,[1] it is necessarily less authoritative than either Le Roy or Levet. Both Le Roy and Levet are imperfect, also, but we must rely upon them for the present and always, though a critical edition which I expect to publish within a year or two should enable students to understand the old farce better than any or all editions allow us to understand it now.

* * * * *

It may be interesting to know how Fournier's version of this farce is arranged for production at the Comédie Française. It is divided into three acts. The first ends with the Draper's brief soliloquy (p. 23). The second act begins, therefore, with Patelin's return to Guillemette (p. 24).

[1] My demonstration of this statement will be published in *Romania* at an early date.

The next scene, except the words "Hello! Master Pierre!" spoken by the Draper a moment after he has knocked at Patelin's door, must be omitted. The Draper's soliloquy (pp. 42–43) will be uttered before he quits Patelin's bedroom.

Pursuing this system, we must omit the Draper's soliloquy on page 45, though we hear him pounding angrily on Patelin's door, and distinguish the words "Ho, there! mis'ess: where are you hiding?" Next, the Draper must speak his following lines (p. 54) in the room at Patelin's mostly as a soliloquy.

Act III begins with the interview between the Draper and his Shepherd (p. 55). As the Shepherd leaves him, the Draper disappears within his shop; then the Shepherd, instead of going to Patelin's house and calling, "Is any one within?" meets Patelin as that worthy comes strolling across the market-place, and accosts him because he recognises by Patelin's dress that he is a lawyer. We must now give the Sheperd an exit after his last lines on page 64 ("Why, as agreed, sir," etc.); he will reappear, somewhere in the crowd, about as the Judge asks, "Where is the defendant? Is he present in person?" shortly after the beginning of the

trial scene. From this point onward the piece proceeds precisely as it did when it was first performed, to judge by LeRoy and Levet.

In the text of my translation hardly any of these suggestions for rearrangement occur; for they are purely modern and would often contradict the other set of stage-directions which are reasonably derived from study of the text. These are largely my own, though many of them are due to my notes on a performance of Fournier's version at the Comédie Française in August, 1904.

Elsewhere (pages xxvii–xxix) will be found a pretty accurate description of the stage-setting adopted by the Comédie Française.[1] Absolute accuracy is something I am far from claiming; for while the play was in progress the pit was rather dim, and I was too fascinated to be taking notes.

In the oldest texts of *Patelin* there is but one stage-direction (see Notes on the Text, Note v), and there is no division into acts or scenes; nor are the verses numbered.

[1] See the diagrams and publisher's note (pp. ix, xiii) showing another and much less elaborate method of arranging the stage. This, I believe, was approximately the plan devised for performances of my version at "The 47 Workshop"—the dramatic laboratory of Harvard University, directed by Prof. Geo. P. Baker—in December, 1913.

As to costume very little need be said; for M. Boutet de Monvel's sixteen dry-point etchings show admirably how the various personages in our farce would have been dressed about the year 1465, and they are delightfully intelligent interpretations of the text—therefore doubly valuable to all students of *Patelin*. I venture to suggest that they be studied with particular care by persons who undertake to perform this farce. In the fourth volume of his work on *Le Costume Historique*, Racinet gives a lithographic reproduction of a fifteenth-century miniature showing what colours might be worn by a Judge, his Clerk, a Lawyer, and a Bailiff (or *Sergent à verge*), etc., in the second half of the fifteenth century. This lithograph is a copy of a French manuscript marked "Ancien fonds 9387" and preserved at the Bibliothèque Nationale. The miniature is probably an accurate representation of a court scene of that period. But the court scene in *Patelin* may reasonably be supposed to occur in a market-place.

As we learn from the opening conversation between Patelin and Guillemette, their clothes are threadbare; and as the Shepherd says (to Patelin), "even though I be ill clad," we may safely assume that his apparel was mostly in rags.

The six illustrative woodcuts which Pierre Levet published with his *Patelin* in 1489 are offered in facsimile with this translation. My researches indicate that these woodcuts were made especially for Levet, and were not borrowed, with little or no sense of fitness, from some earlier work, as commonly happened in the infancy of printing. They are valuable for two reasons: in the first place they are almost contemporaneous with our farce (*ca.* 1464), and show, however crudely, what the illustrator, or illustrators (for there may have been two), fancied to have been the looks of five characters whose likes could be observed at any time; in the second place, these woodcuts are, I feel sure, the first that were ever made to illustrate for the printing-press a comedy composed in a modern tongue. Do they prove anything as to the use of stage scenery? Or are we to believe their setting is purely conventional, chosen merely because the engraver did not care to sketch figures in the air? The question is hard to answer, yet I am convinced that the farces *were not performed on empty platforms;* the "serious drama" was staged with complicated machinery, and it is hardly reasonable to suppose that the farces, which grew out of the "serious drama" and

were often performed with it, could have lacked all scenery, or that they had, forsooth, no other setting than a wall, a floor, a bench and a chair. No archæological proof exists to compel conscientious moderns to adopt a sceneless stage in performing medieval comedies; on the other hand, art does not require that they be elaborately staged, with gorgeous scenery such as is generally used to make Shakespere's plays seem more plausible to persons whose imaginations can not perceive the temple-haunting martlet amid his lov'd mansionry.

Now, as to this translation. To the best of my belief no other English translation of *Patelin* has ever been printed. Thus there was no model, either to help or to harm; nor was there, furthermore, any adequate dictionary or commentary to quicken the pace. I cannot say, as Shelton said of his *Don Quixote*, that I did this work in forty days.

My first version, printed in 1905, took nearer twenty months, and the moment it was out I began to discover to what extent I had fallen short. If we exclude Maître Patelin's ravings in various lingos, the whole farce is written in the purest fifteenth-century Parisian French. Now, if this fifteenth-century French had been used by our author to describe nothing but customs with

which we are still familiar, if he had merely employed what is now archaic language to express ideas common to his time and ours, the task would have been only ten times more difficult than to translate a play by Bourget or Brieux ; he did not : the farce of Maître Patelin forces us to tackle the doubly difficult problem of translating both archaic language and archaic thought.

That is the chief reason why I have felt compelled to take certain liberties. These need not be specified ; whoever desires to know precisely what they are has only to compare my translation with the texts printed by Le Roy and Levet. I have reformed my original version without fear or mercy. Whole lines, many of them pleasing enough in our author's graceful verse, would be clumsy in any conceivable translation and have therefore been radically altered or cut out. Again, the original contains a proportion of oaths, mostly obsolete, which would be tiresome in their modern equivalents as well as in any form—a proportion excessive in every sense ; I have reduced this proportion and have softened a good many of those which remain, to suit the style of our time. Furthermore, I have attempted to make intelligible various passages which no one but an archæologist could under-

stand in any precise translation, and, finally, I have endeavoured to make this new version thoroughly suitable for performance—that, I believe, was also the intention of the original author.

Certain persons who admire the older classics, partly for the sake of the archaic phrases which they necessarily contain, have wondered why I should have put this medieval farce into *modern* English—into English so modern that it has hardly more than an archaic tone. For their benefit I will say that my object in making this translation was psychological rather than archæological. "Sire," said the mayor of a village to Napoleon, "we have three reasons for not firing a salvo in honour of Your Majesty; the first is that we have no cannon." "You need not give the others," responded the Emperor. Similarly, I had at least three reasons for not attempting to put *Maître Patelin* into the colloquial English of 1460 or even 1660. The first is that such a feat would have been impossible; the second is that as the original author wished to portray living scenes and living characters, so I have desired to give you Patelin, Guillemette, and the rest, alive; and so they have seemed to those who have seen them in this form, and heard living English on their lips.

The Stage-Setting of the Comédie Française

(With some stage-directions)

ACT I

A MARKET-PLACE, such as one might have seen in a small French town about the year 1465. To the left, a low building of which two sides are partly visible. This is the shop of the draper Guillaume Joceaulme, whose name is written in large Gothic letters over the heavy double door. Behind this shop, but separated from it by a lane, stands a dwelling whose roof rises from several gables to various peaks, joined by decorative ridges. A little further to the right, in the distant background, stands a church tower, skirted on the left by a narrow street which is lost to view among the houses that lean over it and straggle along its sides. In the foreground, half concealing the church tower, is a stone canopy, or market-cross, whose roof rises steeply to a stone tuft, like the finial of a cathedral.

In each of the four sides of this structure is a niche with a stone seat. The only seat visible will be occupied by the Judge during the trial scene. The whole canopy rests on masonry so disposed as to form six or seven steps on all four sides.

In the foreground to the right, facing the shop of Guillaume, is a stone dwelling, and beyond it, in the background, are other buildings through which runs a street so narrow and tortuous that it is soon lost to view in an uncertain mass of houses which separate it from the church.

In the foreground, between the market-cross and the Draper's shop, stands a short thick post on which rests a box with a slot in it to admit the God's-pennies of those who trade in the market-place.

When the curtain rises on this Gothic scene the townsfolk are just beginning to bestir themselves for the day's business and the glow of morning is visible over the housetops, though the light has not illuminated the crooked lanes. There are vague noises; an apprentice opens the Draper's shop, brings out a table, and upon this counter he sets about arranging some of his master's goods in orderly piles. Presently Master Pierre Patelin emerges from the street to

the left, followed by his wife Guillemette. The lawyer is bent in meditation. As he slowly enters the market-place he begins to speak to Guillemette.

ACT II

A room in Patelin's house. In the left wall is a door opening on the street. Against the rear wall stands a bedstead with a tester whose curtains reach the floor and may be drawn so as to hide the bed completely. Near the bed and the door is a great armchair. In the wall to the right is a window through which enters a rather dim light. Before this window stands a heavy wooden table, very plain, and close to the table is an ordinary chair. Though the room looks tidy enough, everything about it bears witness to poverty.

ACT III

The Draper's shop is closed; otherwise the same setting as for Act I.

Introduction

PATELIN belongs to a series of farces which had come mysteriously into being as early as 1277, when a little piece called *The Boy and the Blind Man* was performed at Tournay.[1] Most of these farces have been lost, but the hundred and fifty or so that happen to survive show clearly enough what must have been the character and range of all.

[1] If not in 1277, at all events about that time. This tiny farce was discovered by M. Paul Meyer some fifty years ago. Of the farces extant two score were found by some one rummaging in a Berlin attic about 1840. *The Boy and the Blind Man* owes its preservation to the happy chance that some scribe saw fit to copy it at the end of a manuscript containing the *Roman d'Alexandre*.

This farce is no shapeless embryo, but shows, on the contrary, that farce-makers must have been plying their trade as early, at least, as 1250. The theme of *The Boy and the Blind Man* is picaresque. An urchin offers to lead a blind man, whose trustfulness he rewards by robbery and violence; but, like Molière's Scapin, the boy contrives to make his victim believe that some third person is guilty.

Two comic plays by Adam de la Hale belong to the same period, but they could hardly be called farces.

The old farces breathe the scandal and mockery of their time. Seldom if ever do they rise to a height from which man can be seen in his relation to the world. They reek of a cold sensuality into which love never enters. They are nearly all devoid of the humour which accompanies a Molière's insight into the weaknesses of man and the vagaries of society. Like most modern farces they deal with fads, rather than with the great movements of their time. No extant farce alludes unmistakably to Jeanne d'Arc: she belonged to an earlier age than that in which she was born; but women with almost no redeeming quality abound, and are portrayed with a coarseness of feeling and an indelicacy of language for which occasional wit cannot atone. Graceful irony, irony like that of the *Franc-archer de Bagnolet*, is rare. There are no heroes and no heroines, no brave actions and no leaders; but plenty of rogues and fools, whose guile and folly give rise to those situations which picaresque literature swarms with and which had once delighted the makers of *fabliaux*. But these situations are realistic, almost invariably, and modern. Whether the farces are base or not, we of the twentieth century should find it easier to talk with their authors than with the

bards who two or three centuries earlier had sung of war and romance.

When the farces which we are considering were most popular, chivalry was rapidly going out of fashion; the modern world of business and "practical" ideas was coming in; the bourgeois had ousted the knight, and having money to spend, he spent it on purveyors who were ready to tell him about himself and his neighbours. The town-crier gave him some news, but that was not highly spiced; real journalists were still unknown. At the theatre, and there only, could he get reflections of life. It mattered little whether these reflections were false; whether they were due to sheer second-hand glimpses, so to speak, cast into disreputable corners, never resting on life's broad avenues; he craved sensation, he liked heightened scenes based on contemporary gossip or contemporary facts, flavoured with scandal, something credible but seemingly not commonplace.

In the long-winded mysteries he could witness the spectacular performance of biblical scenes from the Creation to the Crucifixion, or of scenes derived from later history and legend. The miracle-plays manifested the power of Our Lady or of some saint, intervening in behalf of a

medieval or earlier celebrity on the brink of perdition. In both these types thoroughly popular scenes abounded. Many specimens of the "serious drama" contain comic episodes, different, however, from those of the farces. In the Middle Ages the Devil inspired terror, but he was also closely akin to the mountebank. Hence his presence on the medieval stage. Clad in skins of beasts, or in other fantastic garb, he and his imps performed antics both fearful and grotesque.

The moralities were commonly didactic, and dealt, like *Everyman*, with abstractions, such as Gluttony and the five senses, Lust, Learning, or Better-than-before;[1] the *sotties* are mainly claptrap satirical dialogues showing little or no plot and composed for clowns or *sots*, who enlivened their garrulous banter by performing acrobatic feats. These *sotties* were written in verse, but otherwise they closely resemble the medleys of dialogue, song, and gymnastics to be found nowadays at almost any music-hall.

With the *sotties* and the moralities the farces

[1] When Patelin mockingly suggests that the Draper takes him for "Brainless" (p. 83) he is alluding, presumably, to a stock figure in this symbolical family, though "Brainless" (*Escervelé*) may have been the nickname of some real person familiar to the audiences which witnessed the first performances of our farce.

have a great deal in common, so much, sometimes, that one can hardly distinguish between them ; but the farces are generally more like life, and there are some reasons for believing that they were more popular.[1] In them the bourgeois saw images of his existence, and though the reflection of reality often resembles the distorted figures beheld in some old-fashioned mirror, never before had literature come nearer to the facts of life in its homely or petty phases. Like some modern reprobate who was flattered to find a grossly realistic caricature of himself in a comic paper, many a citizen of the fifteenth century, happening to find himself travestied in a farce, could have said, *Cet ignoble individu, c'est moi!* The

[1] This Introduction merely glimpses into the history of medieval drama. Mr. E. K. Chambers has gathered an immense mass of information in his two volumes on *The Medieval Stage*, Oxford, 1903, and Mr. J. Mortensen's very readable book on *Le théâtre français au moyen âge*, Paris, 1903, also deals with facts. Creizenach's *Geschichte des neuern Dramas* is accurate, and comprehensive in the main, but does not give the medieval French farces quite so much attention as they deserve. In English, so far as I am aware, this Introduction is the only study based on an independent investigation of all the farces, *sotties*, etc., now extant. Every statement of fact made in these twenty-one pages might have been accompanied by a foot-note referring to the evidence ; but such foot-notes must be reserved for another book.

farces were, in fact, the only form of art that enabled him to witness household or other familiar scenes, and little as the average truth was like the theatrical representation, his enjoyment was immense. Through eye and ear he could relish depravity with nothing more than a mental participation in the sin. Here was an offset to the humdrum round. At church he could hear the parish priest chant psalms and pray for the cure of souls; at the theatre he might catch him in merrier business, conniving with crafty housewives to gull their husbands, and sinning as often as he could get a chance to sin. Here foolish rich men were regularly bamboozled by sly "galants"; merchants cheated and were cheated in their turn; fools gave rein to their folly; everybody was tempted and fell. The whole middle-class world, and sometimes nobles or churls, had an opportunity to be vividly ridiculous.

In these old farces vice almost always gets the better of virtue; thinking is mostly scheming; love is mere feigning; truth is boldly sacrificed to mirth, and mirth is the aim of all. No wonder that Bossuet, finding the same old *esprit gaulois* alive in Molière, called him an "infamous histrion." Nor is it in the least astonishing that a parish priest, and later the Archbishop of

Paris, refused to allow Molière's body to be buried in consecrated ground. These ecclesiastics were merely keeping up a tradition which their predecessors had established when the farce-makers, indifferent as to the morality of their *dramatis personæ*, were charged with undoing the work of the Church. There is, indeed, no reason to suppose that the old farces increased either piety or goodness, however much they may have amused their hearers and sharpened their wits.

He who seeks to build a history of manners out of such material must be wary indeed; for the farces display a perverted interest in special aspects of vice and folly in the lower and middle classes, or their familiars, rather than in all contemporary life. But they record the every-day language of their time. Without them to help us, we should not know a rich variety of oaths, slang, saws, superstitions, and so forth; had the specimens that survive been lost, the habits and every-day thoughts of the fourteenth, fifteenth, and early sixteenth centuries would be even further beyond our ken than now.

The old farces were always composed in octosyllabic rime, are written in a conversational style, and they are never poetical.[1] They are

[1] Let it be noted also that with hardly an exception they

for the most part brief, not a third as long as *Patelin*. Sometimes one finds a neatly constructed plot, and ingenious situations are not lacking; but in general they are flimsily constructed and seem more like dramatised anecdotes than like true drama; natural motives are too often absent, and their psychology is not so accurate as that which our modern farces commonly display, yet the dialogue is often lively and produces an adequate illusion.

From what has been said it need not be supposed that shallowness was universal; for Villon knew himself, at least, and embodied his wayward, passionate, will-less life in lyric verse which for vividness and sincerity surpasses all other lyric poetry written in his time or in the Middle Ages. He is the most gifted poet of the fifteenth century, as the author of *Patelin* is its most gifted dramatist. The historian Commines was another shrewd observer of his fellow men, and these are not all. Great, too, though the defects of the farces are,

are anonymous. Whether working singly or in collaboration, their authors seem to have regarded this style of writing as something impersonal. The "serious" drama (for example, certain "mysteries"), lyric poetry, novels, histories, and various other kinds of literature, we often find attributed in the oldest MSS. or printed editions to some author whose name is attached thereto, either openly or secretly.

they show a keener appreciation of reality and a greater gift of natural expression than had been shown by any other form of medieval literature composed in France, save, perhaps, the realistic passages in certain *nouvelles*, in the "serious drama," in Villon, and in Adam de la Hale.

The farces must have arisen pretty early in the thirteenth century; in the fourteenth century, and even till the middle of the fifteenth, they seem to have languished; for farce-makers could not thrive amid war and waste. The relatively prosperous times that followed the Hundred Years' War were their Golden Age; but the Renaissance, with its Plautus and Terence, who for some twelve centuries had been preserved by monks more capable of copying manuscripts than of understanding them, brought new ideals. Playwrights began to forsake the market-place and the farces grew fewer and fewer, though the writing of them never wholly ceased. When they lost their hold, most of them perished; hardly a manuscript is left, and only a few were chosen when the early printers began to search for entertaining matter amid the ruck of the Middle Ages. Nevertheless they were by no means completely forgotten; whoever reads

Molière carefully will observe, I think, that he owes much to these crude pieces, as well as to Latin and Italian comedy, and he seems to owe something specifically to *Maître Patelin*, which had not been forgotten in his time.

Patelin distinctly belongs to the *genre*, but in every regard it excels all other extant farces. The author of this piece, whoever he may have been[1] and wherever he may have lived, was a genius, and when he wrote it he was inspired. Remote though he may ever remain from us, we know that he was not remote from his own time. He catches its spirit and embodies that spirit in such a way as to create at once the spell of illusion which is essential to all dramatic art.

Whether the author of *Patelin* cared deeply about morals is an unsolvable riddle. Michelet declares somewhere that *Patelin* is the "epic of an age of rogues"; unquestionably rogues are its heroes and their rascality is its theme. If that "practical" monarch Louis XI[2] ever saw *Patelin* performed—and nothing undemonstrable is more

[1] Who was he? My friend Mr. Louis Cons answers "Guillaume Alexis," and proposes to give his reasons for this answer at an early date. See foot-note, p. xxxvii, and the note on page xii.

[2] See Ernest Renan's essay on *Patelin* in his *Essais de morale et de critique*, 1859.

likely—how keenly he must have relished its common sense, its mirthful and remorseless roguery! We may imagine his laughter as he saw one rascal outwit another, until a mere lout, a "sheep in clothing," outwits them all. That was something after his own heart. We need not regard the five worthies of our farce as disciples of Louis XI: they are more than that, for they express what is unloveable in that century more plainly than does the King. They represent in several distinct and ludicrous phases the poverty, the greed, the cynical cunning, the selfishness, and the grinning depravity characteristic of the fifteenth century, at least in France. *Patelin* is a shabby pettifogger; his successful fellow barristers are arrayed, as he says, in silks and satins, *de camelos . . . et de camocas;* but the apparel is nothing: the lawyers are mostly rogues. And so is our Judge: he cares little about justice and he invites Patelin to sup with him, though that lawyer has spent a Saturday in the stocks. The Draper is both greedy and sly; the Shepherd is a numskull with a highly developed bump of villainy. And what is Guillemette? A receiver of stolen goods. Not one of these types has any active sense of right. Their morality, as Renan says, is to succeed; their greatest weakness, their

only absurdity, is to be outdone. Philippe de Commines sums up their ethics in a maxim: "Ceulx qui gaignent," says he, "en ont tousjours l'honneur."

Patelin scored an immense success. It had two sequels, both worthless, and was often quoted. If Guillaume Alexis is not the first to allude, by citation, to our farce (why shouldn't he!), the earliest known record of it may be found in a legal document. This document, a grant of pardon issued by Louis XI before Easter, 1469, recites that one Jean de Costes, who had been employed in the King's chancellery, was drinking one day with several companions at an inn kept by Glaude Sillon at Tours. After supper Jean de Costes stretched himself out on a bench by the fire, saying, "By God, I am ill!"; and, as the document tells us, he addressed these words to the wife of the aforesaid Glaude Sillon and said, "I would fain sleep here, and not go back to-day to my lodgings." Hereupon a certain Le Danceur (who seems to have started the quarrel in which he was killed) went and spoke to the aforesaid suppliant as follows: "Jehan de Costes, I know you well; you fancy to play Patelin and to feign illness, because you are planning to sleep here" (*Jehan de Costes, je vous cognoys bien: vous*

cuidez pateliner et faire du malade, pour cuider coucher ceans).[1]

In a short time the name Patelin had become proverbial and the *Farce of Patelin* had attained a vogue unparalleled in the history of the early stage and rarely equalled since. Of five editions printed between 1485, or thereabouts, and 1500, five unique exemplars are known to survive; other editions must have existed. Three or four editions published shortly after 1500 are also represented by only one exemplar. At least a score appeared during the sixteenth century, and the popularity of our farce hardly waned till French playwrights began, as we have seen, to be ashamed of what had once delighted the common folk, and set learnedly about imitating Roman or Italian comedy; but the *esprit gaulois* could not be quelled, and we find it once more, more vigorous than ever and lifted out of its

[1] This legal document gives our *terminus ad quem*. Our *terminus a quo* is indicated by the Draper's allusion to the "great frost" (p. 17). "In the year 1464," writes the author of the *Chronique du Mont Saint-Michel*, "the winter was severe, more severe than for thirty years, and the snowfalls were deeper than any man could recall." To this determination of dates I shall return in another place, where a comparison of the values of the various coins mentioned in our text will afford further evidence.

wallow of lubricity, though not yet angelically pure, in the comedies of Molière.

Patelin is not the starting-point of any school, but it would be a long task to narrate the history of its influence on literature in and out of France. Some of its phrases are used by Guillaume Alexis, Coquillart, and others. In 1560 Estienne Pasquier, having read and reread this "sample" of the old farces, declared it equal to any Greek, Latin, or Italian comedy. Marot seems to have read it (*ca.* 1490), and Rabelais quotes it again and again. He speaks of the "noble Patelin," who was evidently a rascal after his own heart, and we may be sure that Rabelais's famous scene between Panurge and Pantagruel was inspired by *Patelin*. "Epistemon said, 'Parlez vous christian, mon ami, ou langaige patelinois?'" (II, 9).

It was not Rabelais, however, who first carried Patelin's fame across the Channel; for not later than 1535, and probably ten years earlier, *A Hundred Mery Tales and Quicke Answers* contained an anecdote "Of hym that payde his dette with crienge bea." [1] In 1700 a dull dramatist named Brueys composed, or, to speak more descriptively, he manufactured his *Patelin, comédie, composée en trois actes, avec un prologue, et*

[1] See Notes on the Text, Note xxxv.

trois intermèdes, meslés de déclamations, de chants et de danses: Et representée pour la première fois sans Prologue & sans intermèdes le 4. Juin 1706.[1]

Had Monsieur de Brueys been born a humorist, he would either have written better comedies, or none. With Palaprat's assistance, the abbé pleased for a while; that is the best that can be said for him. Brueys and his contemporaries liked literary monsters. They borrowed and muddled, very much as the compilers of mysteries had done in the Middle Ages. Unfailingly commonplace, Brueys tells his readers that he had culled from the old farce as one might gather gold from a dunghill! We need not wonder that the abbé decorated his comedy with a Prologue wherein some worn-out deities air his theories of the drama. Yet Brueys's hybrid succeeded, and gave birth in its turn, *contra naturam*, to *The Village Lawyer*, the second version of *Patelin* to be made in England.

This curtain-raiser, ascribed without evidence to the elder Macready,[2] was performed at The

[1] See *L'Avocat Patelin*. Translated by S. F. G. Whitaker, London, 1905; reviewed in *The Evening Post*, New York, June 12, 1905, and in *The Athenæum*, London, August 26, 1905.

[2] See the *Dictionary of National Biography*, vol. xxxv, p. 277.

Haymarket in 1787. *The Village Lawyer*, whose hero is called not Patelin but Scout, was printed at Dublin in 1792, having been received, so the title-page declares, with "Universal Applause" in London and in Dublin.

Was this little piece published, without regard for its author, from one of those unsigned manuscripts which actors use? Or is it possible that the author had a scrupulous conscience? Whatever the truth may be, *The Village Lawyer* is by no means so absurd as Brueys's hotchpotch of modernised medieval folk and pseudo-antique divinities.

The Village Lawyer was performed at the Park Theatre, in New York City, in November, 1801, and again in 1808. The elder Jefferson (1774–1832)[1] played the part of Sheepface, who is merely Thibaut Agnelet (or "Lambkin"), in his second reincarnation. In 1863 one James Maffitt, a pirate by nature, but a playwright by trade, on some marauding voyage, fell upon *The Village Lawyer*. Mrs. Scout and her daughter Kate, being no longer useful, were made to walk the plank. Scout, known in other days as

[1] Jefferson left England about 1795. Probably he included *The Village Lawyer* in his repertory because it was still popular.

Master Pierre Patelin, or Lawyer Patelin, became Benjamin Hardcrust. Maffitt was thus rid of any necessity of seeing Kate wedded to Charles, the son of Snarl (Brueys's Guillaume), and he needed no more than a week or so to shear the legal episode out of *The Village Lawyer*.

The Mutton Trial,[1] for thus Maffitt named his plagiary, was performed by four members of a troop of minstrels, at the American Theatre, a New York playhouse, in 1863. The cast of characters was as follows:

SHEEPFACE, a Shepherd . .	*Charles White*
BENJ. HARDCRUST, a Lawyer	*Nelse Seymour*
OLD SNARL, a Farmer	*Billy Burke*
JUSTICE	*James Wambold*

These four actors were probably blackened to look like negroes, and perhaps they remained so throughout the long and varied performance in

[1] *The Mutton Trial* | *An Ethiopian Sketch, in Two Scenes* | *By James Maffitt* | *Arranged by Charles White* | *The Celebrated Ethiopian Comedian* | *Author of* | *Magic Penny* | *Jolly Millers* [here follows a list of two score pieces] etc., etc. | *As first Produced at the American Theatre, No.* 444 *Broadway* | *New York* | etc., etc. A copy of this rare farce, whose existence was made known to me by Mr. Brander Matthews, is preserved at the Library of Congress, where it was deposited to obtain copyright in 1874.

which *The Mutton Trial* was but an interlude lasting "twenty minutes." That they imitated negro manners or negro speech is inconceivable.

A notion as to the quality of Maffitt's style may be derived from the following quotations. "Well," says Hardcrust, "here I am, Lawyer Hardcrust, with scarcely enough money in my clothes to buy a meal of victuals." And on advising Sheepface how to outwit the law, Hardcrust speaks as follows: "Well, now understand my plan. Any question asked you by the Judge, the Court (*sic*), or the jury (*sic*), you must answer it in the language of the old ewes when they call their young." As in *The Village Lawyer*, Sheepface responds, "That is my mother tongue." In *The Village Lawyer*, when Scout attempts to collect his fee but gets nothing save *baa!*, he cries out angrily, "What, again! braved by a Mongril Cur, a bleating Bellweather, a ——"; in the American piece Hardcrust exclaims, "What! am I to be outwitted by a country wetherbull!" Further examples from Maffitt's plagiary would only serve to show that the original Patelin, cheapened by Brueys, and afterwards by an unknown British hack, fell almost to the level of a buffoon, on his third and final reincarnation.

To retell a long story in few words, the farce of *Patelin* came into being in France about 1464, and assuredly it owes nothing to the story of Mak, the Thief in what is called "The Shepherds' Play," in the *Towneley Mysteries*; its origin is lost in the darkness that has so long enveloped its author. *Patelin* is wholly French and wholly medieval; it alludes to nothing "classic," and has nothing whatever to do with ancient comedy. Its popularity was immense; by 1520 it had been freely translated into Latin by Connibert; by 1535 it was known in England (perhaps, too, in Germany) and we find one of its chief episodes in the Italian comedy *Arzigogolo;* about 1787 some nameless British playwright borrowed or stole from Brueys's hotchpotch (1700) all the plot and many details of *The Village Lawyer;* about 1863 James Maffitt plundered *The Village Lawyer* and called his booty *The Mutton Trial;* this final deformation of *Patelin* was performed by "Ethiopian" minstrels in New York City, some four centuries after the original farce had first appeared in France. About forty years later (1905) my first translation, however crude, made the piece accessible in a more accurate form which has been performed upon various occasions by various

players, sometimes authorised, sometimes not! Now it appears once more in English, "completely revised," approximately four hundred and fifty years since it was composed, and approximately four hundred and twenty-eight years since it was first printed, by Guillaume Le Roy.

No other farce written in the Middle Ages, and naturally no later comedy, can claim so long and varied a history; yet in a mere sketch not half that history can be told, but the popularity of this farce is no puzzle: its author hit upon an extraordinarily clever plot,[1] and, unlike his

[1] This plot, like most others, was not "created." As early as 1370, or thereabouts, Eustache Deschamps had composed the so-called *Farce de Mestre Trubert*, a dramatic satire aimed at pettifoggers, or, one might say, at lawyers in general; for the Bar was in ill repute throughout the Middle Ages.

Trubert is hoodwinked by his client Entroignart (= Cheatem), who asks his advice about the theft of an almond, a trifling fact that had led to serious consequences. Having got his retainer, Trubert, not altogether unlike Patelin, proceeds to enumerate some of the many wiles by which he knows how to evade the law. He then suggests a game of dice which results in his losing his money and his clothes. Similar stories about the Bar were popular, and it is likely that the author of *Patelin* built his legal episode on a like anecdote, and that he welded it to the story of some scalawag who had cheated a creditor by shamming illness or insanity, a frequent occurrence in real life. See vol. vii, pp. 155–174,

contemporaries, he had the genius to tell his fable dramatically in charming verse. Like a precocious child that has aroused laughter by some show of wit, he repeats his jests until they begin to stale; but his insight is keen, and his characters are drawn so firmly that each is a type, possible in nature, but nowhere else to be found in literature. Although close examination reveals more than one inconsistency, the illusion that he creates betokens a rare imaginative power, a clear vision, and so objective a portrayal of that vision that the author nowhere gives a genuine clue as to his own personality. We may agree with Renan in thinking the author of *Patelin* a low and heartless jester; but he betrays nothing as to himself, except, perhaps, a tendency to delight us with humour wantonly cruel; he is not a moraliser but a dramatist, and the best dramas are surely those that seem to tell the most about other men and the least about their authors.

and vol. xi, pp. 293 and 294, of the works of Deschamps, in the edition published by the Société des Anciens Textes français. The trick by which Lambkin cheats both the Draper and its deviser, Patelin, has numerous close analogues, some of them older than our farce and found among the popular anecdotes of various nations.

The Farce of
Master Pierre Patelin

Master Pierre Patelin

THE FIRST ACT

SCENE.—*At* LAWYER PATELIN'S *dwelling.*

PATELIN.

By Saint Mary! Guillemette, for all my pains to pick up something, or bag a little pelf, we can't save a penny. Now, I've seen the time when I had clients.

GUILLEMETTE.

Aye, true enough! I've seen the day when everybody must have you to win his suit; now you're called the Hungry but Hopeful one.

PATELIN.

[*As if he had not heard.*] What's more—and I don't say it to brag—in the whole circuit where we hold our sessions there's no one abler, except the Mayor.

GUILLEMETTE.

[*Naïvely.*] Aye, but he has studied a great while to be a scholar.

PATELIN.

Whose case ever lags, if I set about it? And yet I don't call myself a scholar; but I'll venture to say that I can chant by the book with our priest as well as if I'd been as long in school as Charlemaine in Spain!

GUILLEMETTE.

What use is that to us? Not a rap! We're all but starved; our clothes are all holes, and there's no telling where new ones are to come from. Ha! a fig for all you know!

PATELIN.

Tush, tush! Upon my conscience, if I care to set my wits at work, I shall find a way to get some finery. Please God, we shall see better days. If I stick to business, they'll not find my equal.

GUILLEMETTE.

Aye, that they won't! At cheating you're a masterhand.

PATELIN.

At regular law!

GUILLEMETTE.

At gulling, you mean. Oh, I know what I'm talking about; for, to tell the truth, though you've neither education nor common sense, you're reckoned about the sliest rascal in the whole parish.

PATELIN.

Nobody can beat me at handling cases.

GUILLEMETTE.

Heaven save me! You mean at plucking gulls. They say so anyhow.

PATELIN.

And so they do of those who sport their silks and satins, and talk of being barristers; but they're not! Enough of this prattle: I'm going to market.

GUILLEMETTE.

[*Astonished.*] To market?

PATELIN.

[*As if humming a verse of some old ditty.*] Yes, "*Going to market, my pretty maid.*" Now, suppose I buy a strip of cloth, or some other trifle for household use? . . . Our clothes are nothing but rags.

GUILLEMETTE.

You're stoney broke. What can you do there?

PATELIN.

[*Laying his forefinger on his nose and winking craftily.*] That's telling! If I fail, my dear, to bring home cloth enough for both of us, and to spare, then I'm a fibber! [*Playfully surveying* GUILLEMETTE.] What colour suits you best? A greenish gray? Or Brussels cloth? Or what?

GUILLEMETTE.

Whatever you can get. Borrowers must not be choosers.

PATELIN.

[*Counting on his fingers.*] For you, two yards and a half, and for me, three, or rather, four. That makes . . .

GUILLEMETTE.

Who the mischief will trust you with this cloth?

PATELIN.

Leave that to me! They'll trust me, beyond a doubt,—and be paid on Doomsday; for it won't be sooner.

Maistre pierre commence

Saincte marie guillemette
Pour quelque paine que ie mette
Acabasser na ramasser
nous ne pouons rien amasser
or viz ie que iauocassope

Patelin, counting on his fingers

GUILLEMETTE.

Go along, my lamb; by now somebody else may have it on.

PATELIN.

[*Almost to himself, as he walks slowly away.*] I'll buy either gray or green, and for an undergarment, Guillemette, I want three-quarters, or a whole yard of fine dark goods.

GUILLEMETTE.

[*Shaking her head.*] God help me! so you do. Be off with you! [*Calling, as he disappears.*] And if any one stands treat don't refuse him.

PATELIN.

Take good care of everything! [*Exit.*

GUILLEMETTE.

[*Shaking her head skeptically, then uttering an exclamation, half oath, half sigh.*] What merchant . . . ? [*Brightening.*] Oh! I hope he can get away with it!

TABLEAU CURTAIN

[*The curtain is drawn on the shop of* GUILLAUME JOCEAULME, DRAPER.

PATELIN.

[*Peering into the* DRAPER'S *shop.*] Not there? . . . H'm! Yes, there he is. . . . Aye, he's busy with his goods. [*While* PATELIN *is reconnoitring, the* DRAPER *emerges and lays several rolls of goods on his counter. Then, on looking up, he spies* PATELIN, *who greets him with a beguiling smile.*] My dear sir, God bless you!

GUILLAUME JOCEAULME, DRAPER.

And give you joy!

PATELIN.

[*Leaning his hands on the counter.*] I've been longing to see you, Guillaume. How's your health? You're feeling fine?

THE DRAPER.

Aye, that I am!

PATELIN.

[*Holding out his hand.*] There! [*A pause.*] How goes it?

THE DRAPER.

Why, first rate! . . . And how are you?

PATELIN.

[*Giving the* DRAPER *a friendly clap on the shoulder.*] By Saint Peter, never better! . . . So you're feeling cheerful, eh?

THE DRAPER.

To be sure. But merchants, you must know, have their troubles.

PATELIN.

How is business? It yields enough, I trust, to keep the pot a-boiling?

THE DRAPER.

Afore Heaven, my good sir, I hardly know. [*Imitating the cluck of a driver to his horse.*] I manage to get along! [*He sighs.*

PATELIN.

[*In a reminiscent revery.*] Ah, he was a knowing one!—your father was, I mean. God rest his soul! [*Scanning the* DRAPER *with amazement.*] I can hardly believe I'm not looking at him now! What a merchant he was! and clever? . . . [*Waving his hand in such a way as to suggest the almost limitless ability of the elder Joceaulme.*] I swear, you're the very picture of him. . . . If God was ever moved to pity, may he grant your father his soul's pardon!

[*Takes off his hat and glances piously toward heaven. The* DRAPER *follows suit.*

THE DRAPER.

[*Sanctimoniously.*] Amen! Through his

mercy! And ours, too, when it shall please him! [*Both replace their hats.*

PATELIN.

[*With a touch of melancholy.*] Ah, yes! Many a time he foretold me the days that we are come to. I've often thought of it. [*After a slight pause.*] He was one of the good . . .

THE DRAPER.

[*Interrupting* PATELIN'S *reminiscences by offering him a seat.*] Do sit down, sir. I should have asked you before. [*Self-reproachful.*] A thousand pardons!

PATELIN.

[*As if his own comfort were of no importance.*] Tut, tut, man! I'm all right. . . . He used to . . .

[*Another interruption by the* DRAPER, *who, in his zeal to show good manners to a prospective customer, leans over his counter as far as he can, grasps* PATELIN *by the shoulders, and endeavours to force him to sit down.*

THE DRAPER.

Oh, do sit down.

PATELIN.

[*Yielding.*] Gladly. [*A short pause, after which* PATELIN *blithely resumes his yarn.*] "Oh," says he to me, "you'll see marvelous things"! . . . I'll take my oath! ears, nose, mouth, eyes,—no child was ever so like his father. [*Pointing*] That dimpled chin! Why, it's him to a dot! I can't imagine how ever Nature made two so similar faces! Why, look! If you had both been spat against a wall in the selfsame manner and in one array, you wouldn't differ by a hair. But, sir, good Laurentia, your step-aunt, is she still living?

THE DRAPER.

[*Mystified.*] Why, yes!

PATELIN.

[*Rising.*] How comely she seemed to me, and tall, and straight, and full of graces! . . . And you take after her in figure, as if they'd copied her. No family hereabouts comes up to yours for likenesses. The more I see you, . . . Bless my soul! [*Pointing to a mirror.*] Look at yourself. You're looking at your father! [*Clapping the* DRAPER *on the back with jovial familiarity.*] You resemble him closer than a drop of water! . . . What a mettlesome blade he was! the worthy man,—and trusted every one. Heaven forgive him!

He always used to laugh so heartily with me. Would to God more people resembled him! There'd be less wickedness. [*Feeling a piece of cloth.*] How well made this cloth is! how smooth it is, and soft, and nicely woven!

THE DRAPER.

[*Proudly.*] I had it made to order from the wool of my own flock.

PATELIN.

[*Overflowing with admiration.*] You don't say so! What a manager you are! [*Jocularly.*] It's your father all over again. Blood will tell! . . . [*Awestruck.*] You're always, always busy.

THE DRAPER.

[*Solemnly.*] One must be! To get a living a man must be shrewd and enterprising.

[*He looks at* PATELIN, *who nods assent.*

PATELIN.

[*Handling another piece of goods.*] Was this piece dyed in the wool? It's as strong as leather.

THE DRAPER.

[*Showing off the weave of his goods.*] That's Rouen goods, and well fulled, I promise you.

PATELIN.

Now, upon my word, I'm caught by that; I had no thought of getting cloth when I came; by my soul, I hadn't. I'd laid aside some four score crowns for an investment; but twenty or thirty of them will fall to you; I see that plainly, for the colour is so pleasing I can't resist it. [*Sighs, as if feeling a rapture akin to pain.*

THE DRAPER.

Crowns, you say? Now can it be that your borrowers would take less?

PATELIN.

Why, yes, if I chose. It makes no difference what sort of money's paid. [*Picking up the cloth again.*] What kind of goods is this, you say? . . . The more I see it, the sillier it makes me. I must have a coat of that,—and another for my wife.

THE DRAPER.

Cloth costs like holy oil. You shall have some, if you like. Ten or twenty francs are sunk so quickly!

PATELIN.

I don't care: give me my money's worth. [*Whispering in the* DRAPER'S *ear.*] I know of another coin or two that nobody ever got a smell of.

Pathelin

Dea ceſt trop

Le drappier

Ha vous ne ſcaues
comment le drap eſt encheri
treſtout le beſtail eſt peri
ceſt puer par la grant froidure

It's too much!

THE DRAPER.

You don't say so! I'm glad to hear it.

PATELIN.

In a word, I'm hot for this piece, and have some I must.

THE DRAPER.

Right! But first how much do you want? . . . Though you hadn't a brass farthing, the whole pile is at your service.

PATELIN.

[*Gazing rather absent-mindedly at the cloth.*] I know that well, thank you.

THE DRAPER.

You might like some of this sky-coloured stuff?

PATELIN.

First, how much is a single yard to cost? [*On saying this,* PATELIN *holds up a penny so that the* DRAPER *may get a good look at it.*] Here's a penny to seal the bargain in God's name; God's share shall be paid first: that stands to reason.

[*Piously doffs his hat, strides solemnly to a box set up in the market-place for receiving God's-pennies, drops the coin in, and returns to the* DRAPER.

THE DRAPER.

That's the way to talk! You want the bottom price?

PATELIN.

Yes.

THE DRAPER.

[*Decisively.*] It will cost you four and twenty pence a yard.

PATELIN.

Go to! Four and twenty pence! Heaven save us!

THE DRAPER.

[*Laying his hand on his heart.*] I cross my heart! it cost me every whit of that, and I can't afford to lose.

PATELIN.

Lord! it's too much.

THE DRAPER.

You'd never believe how cloth has risen! This winter the live stock all perished in the great frost.

PATELIN.

But twenty pence! twenty pence!

THE DRAPER.

No, sir! Twenty-four. Not a farthing less! Wait till Saturday and you shall see what it's worth. Wool on the fleece, of which there used to be a plenty, cost me on Saint Maudeleyne's day—my oath on it—just twice what it used to cost.

PATELIN.

Very well then! I'll buy without further haggling. Come, measure off!

THE DRAPER.

And pray how much must you have?

PATELIN.

That is easy to answer. What is the width?

THE DRAPER.

Brussels width.

PATELIN.

[*As if to himself, and cocking his head without looking at the* DRAPER.] For me, three yards, and for her—she's tall [*making a gesture as if he were laying his hand on the head of an imaginary* GUILLEMETTE], two and a half. In all, six yards. . . . Why, no; that's not right! How stupid of me! Let's see.

THE DRAPER.

There wants but half a yard to make the six.

PATELIN.

Give me the even six, then. I need a hat as well.

THE DRAPER.

[*Pointing to the other end of his strip of cloth.*] Take hold there. We'll measure. Here they are, and no scrimping. [*He measures, and each time he lets go,* PATELIN *cheats by pulling the cloth a little toward himself.*] One, . . . and two, . . . and three, . . . and four, . . . and five, . . . and six!

PATELIN.

By Saint Peter! Measured close!

THE DRAPER.

[*Looking at* PATELIN, *then turning his ell in the other direction. Naïvely.*] Shall I measure back again?

PATELIN.

[*With cheerful disdain.*] Oh, dear no! There's always a little gain or loss. How much does it all amount to?

THE DRAPER.

Let's see. At four and twenty pence, each, —for the six yards, nine francs.

PATELIN.

[*Aside.*] Hm! Here goes! [*To the* DRAPER.] Six crowns?

THE DRAPER.

Yes.

PATELIN.

Now, sir, will you trust me for 'em? . . . until presently, when you come? [*The* DRAPER *shows symptoms of suspicion.*] No, I don't mean "trust." I'll pay cash—gold—or anything you say—at my house.

THE DRAPER.

[*Ungraciously.*] That's off my road.

PATELIN.

[*With playful irony.*] By my lord Saint Giles, now you're telling gospel truth! Off your road! That's it! You're never ready to drink at my house, but this is the time you shall!

THE DRAPER.

Good Lord! I'm always drinking! [*After a moment's hesitation.*] I'll come; but let me tell you it's against my principles to give credit on a first sale, like this.

PATELIN.

What if I pay for it, not in silver or copper, but in good yellow coin? [*Craftily.*] Oho! and you must have a bite of that goose my wife is roasting!

THE DRAPER.

[*Aside.*] The man drives me mad. [*Aloud.*] Go on! Away! I will follow you, and bring the cloth.

PATELIN.

[*Who by this time has picked up the bundle of goods.*] Not at all! Not at all! It's no trouble. It isn't heavy; I can carry it myself. See! Under my arm. . . . So!

THE DRAPER.

[*Trying to recover his property.*] No, indeed, sir! it would look better for me to bring it.

PATELIN.

[*Tucking the cloth into his long gown.*] I'll be hanged if you do! See how snug it lies, here, under my elbow. What a jolly hump it will give me! Ah! now it's all right! [*With mock hilarity.*] We'll have a fling before you leave.

THE DRAPER.

And I shall get my money as soon as I've arrived?

PATELIN.

You shall that! But no! First you shall dine! I'm glad I have no cash about me now. [*Archly.*] At least you'll come and try my wine; now won't you? When your late father went by my house he used to sing out, "Hullo, friend!" or, "What's the good word?" or, "How do you do?" But you don't care a straw for poor folk, you rich men!

THE DRAPER.

[*Flattered but deprecatory.*] Oh, now, see here; we're the poor ones!

PATELIN.

[*Laughing incredulously.*] Whew! Well, good-bye, good-bye! Turn up soon, and we'll have a good drink. Count on that.

THE DRAPER.

All right! Go ahead, then, and see that I'm paid in gold!

[PATELIN *starts homeward. The* DRAPER *disappears within his shop.*

PATELIN.

[*Crosses to* L. *of the market-place.*] Gold! H'm! Gold! The devil! I made no slips that time! [*Overcome by a sense of immense absurdity,* PATELIN *stops once or twice to laugh gaily and derisively at the mere idea of paying anything*

—*especially in gold.*] No! gold! I'd see him hanged. [*Chuckling.*] He set his own price, but he shall get mine! He must have gold, must he? He shall get it—ha! ha! Would he might run without stopping till he's paid! By Saint John, he'd travel further than from here to Pampeluna!

[*Enters the alley* L. U. *and disappears.*

THE DRAPER.

[*Coming out again.*] Those crowns of his—I'll take care of them! It takes two to make a bargain. That scalawag pays four and twenty pence a yard for cloth that's not worth twenty!

CURTAIN

THE SECOND ACT

SCENE I.—*At* PATELIN'S. GUILLEMETTE *is sitting near the window and facing it. On her lap lies a garment which she is patching. Presently the door is softly opened and* PATELIN *looks in. Seeing that* GUILLEMETTE'S *back is turned, and that she is unaware of his presence, he steals toward her, grinning as he thinks what a surprise she is about to get. Suddenly, when he is quite close, she hears him and turns round with a start.*

PATELIN.

[*Archly, in tone of triumph.*] Guess what I've got!

GUILLEMETTE.

[*Startled.*] What?

PATELIN.

How about that old gown of yours?

GUILLEMETTE.

As if you didn't know! What do you want it for?

PATELIN.

Nothing! nothing! See!

[*He whips the roll of goods from under*

his gown and flaunts it in the face of the astonished GUILLEMETTE.

GUILLEMETTE.

Holy Mother! Who's your client? [*A little frightened.*] What scrape have we got into now? Dear! dear! and who's to pay for it?

PATELIN.

Pay for it? By Saint John, it's paid for. The chap who sold me that isn't crazy, my pet, oh, no! Well fleeced, say I! The rascally curmudgeon! Served him right!

GUILLEMETTE.

But what did it cost?

PATELIN.

Cost? Nothing! Don't worry; it's paid for.

GUILLEMETTE.

Paid for? How? You hadn't a penny.

PATELIN.

[*Mocking.*] Oh, yes, I had—[*Gesture*] one.

GUILLEMETTE.

Oh, come now! You swore to pay, or you gave a note. That's how you came by it! And when the note falls due they'll come and seize our things and carry off everything we have.

PATELIN.

[*Reassuringly.*] Upon my word, I gave only a penny for it all.

GUILLEMETTE.

Bénédicité Maria! A penny? Impossible!

PATELIN.

[*Leaning toward her.*] Here! Pluck out this eye, if he got more, or if he gets more, no matter what tune he sings.

GUILLEMETTE.

But who is he, anyhow?

PATELIN.

A numskull called Guillaume,—Guillaume Joceaulme; since you must know.

GUILLEMETTE.

But how came you to get it for a penny? What was your game?

PATELIN.

It was for God's penny; and yet, had I said, "Let's bind the bargain with a drink," I'd have kept my penny. Anyhow, 'twas well worked. God and he shall share that penny, if they care to; for it is all they shall get, no matter how they carry on.

GUILLEMETTE.

How came he to trust you? he's such a surly beggar.

PATELIN.

Dash me if I didn't make him out such a noble lord that he almost gave it me. I told him what a jewel his late father was. "Ah, brother," says I, "what good stock you come of! No family hereabouts," says I, "compares with yours for virtues," but drat me! what riffraff! The most ill-tempered rabble, I suppose, in all this kingdom. "Guillaume, my friend," says I, "what a likeness you do bear your good father!" Lord! how I heaped it on! And meanwhile I tucked in something about woollens. "And then," says I, "how kind he was about trusting folks, and no airs! You're he," says I, "his spitten image!" But you might have hauled the teeth out of that rascally old porpoise, his late father, or his monkey of a son, before they'd trust a fellow with as much as that! [*snapping his fingers*] or even be polite. Anyhow, I made such an ado and talked so much that he trusted me with six yards.

GUILLEMETTE.

Yes, and he'll never get them back.

PATELIN.

[*Derisively.*] Get them back? [*Pause.*] Get the devil back!

GUILLEMETTE.

[*Laughing.*] Yes, the Crow got his cheese

back, didn't he?—when old Renard the Fox persuaded him to drop it from his beak to sing a song with his lovely voice. Oh! he'll get it back all right. [*She laughs derisively.*

PATELIN.

Listen! He's coming to eat some goose, but there's no goose here. Of course he'll be braying for his money on the spot; now here's the thing! I'll lie on my bed, and play sick; then, when he comes, you'll say, "Sh! speak low!" Then you must groan and pull a long face. "Alas!" (you'll say) "he fell sick these two months past,"—or say six weeks,—and if he cries, "That's all twaddle, for he's just been at my shop," you must say, "Alas! this is no time to fool!" Then let me pipe him a little tune, for music is all he shall get.

GUILLEMETTE.

Trust me to play the game,—but if you slip up again, you may smart for it: you'll catch it worse than the other time.

PATELIN.

Hush now! I know what I'm about. Do as I say.

GUILLEMETTE.

For goodness' sake remember that Saturday they put you in the stocks! Remember how they jeered at you.

PATELIN.

Stop your chatter: he'll be here before we know it. That cloth must stay with us. [*Hiding it under the mattress.*] Now! [*Clambers into bed, rapidly strips himself to his underclothes, and dons a very long nightgown, and a long pointed white nightcap with a long tassel on it. He then removes his shoes and stockings. As each garment is removed, it is flung out between the bed curtains.*] I'm going to bed.

GUILLEMETTE.

[*Laughing at his burlesque preparations.*] Go ahead!

PATELIN.

[*Under the bedclothes.*] No laughing, now!

GUILLEMETTE.

[*As she draws the bed curtains close together.*] Well, rather not! Just watch me weep!

PATELIN.

Mind, now. No flinching, or he'll see what's up.

[*A knocking is heard at the door.* GUILLEMETTE *opens it an inch or two and peeps out, then opens it wide for the* DRAPER, *and steps back.*

THE DRAPER.

Hello! Master Pierre!

GUILLEMETTE.

[*Laying her finger on her lips.*] Oh, sir, if you have anything to say, for mercy's sake speak lower!

THE DRAPER.

God keep you, mistress!

GUILLEMETTE.

Oh, not so loud!

THE DRAPER.

[*Astonished and puzzled.*] Huh? What's the matter?

GUILLEMETTE.

[*Feigning amazement.*] Bless my soul!

THE DRAPER.

Where is he?

GUILLEMETTE.

Alas! Where should he be?

THE DRAPER.

The . . . Who?

GUILLEMETTE.

Ah, sir, how unkind! "Where is he?" May God in his mercy know! He has lain on the very same spot, poor martyr, without budging, for eleven weeks.

Guillemette

Helas ſire
pour dieu ſe vous voulez rien dire
parlez plus bas

Le drappier

Dieu vous gart dame

Guillemette

Ho. plus bas

The Draper visits Patelin

THE DRAPER.

[*Staring open-mouthed.*] Who's this?

GUILLEMETTE.

[*Whispering in the* DRAPER'S *ear.*] Excuse me: I mustn't raise my voice. I believe he's resting. He's a little drowsy. Alas! he's so done up, poor man!

THE DRAPER.

[*In amazement.*] Who?

GUILLEMETTE.

Master Pierre.

THE DRAPER.

[*Indignantly.*] Whew! And didn't he come to buy six yards of cloth, just now?

GUILLEMETTE.

Who? He?

THE DRAPER.

He came from my shop not a quarter of an hour ago. Hurry! I'm wasting time. Come! No more nonsense! My money!

GUILLEMETTE.

Oh, stop your joking! This is no time for jokes.

THE DRAPER.

[*Waving his arms.*] Here! My money! Are you crazy? I want nine francs.

GUILLEMETTE.

Oh, Guillaume! It's no time for fooling. Go along and trifle with your simpletons, if you're out for a lark.

THE DRAPER.

[*Angrily.*] I'll have nine francs, or I'll be hanged!

GUILLEMETTE.

[*Trying to keep from laughing, while she wipes away imaginary tears.*] Oh, dear! sir, not everybody is so fond of laughter and claptrap as you are.

THE DRAPER.

[*Beseechingly.*] Please, no joking now; fetch me Master Pierre.

GUILLEMETTE.

Bad luck to you! What? To-day?

THE DRAPER.

[*Gesticulating angrily.*] Isn't this place, here, where I am, the house of Master Pierre Patelin?

GUILLEMETTE.

Yes! And may they stick you into bedlam! [*crossing herself, then in a whisper*]—but not me! Sh!

THE DRAPER.

Devil take it! [*Sarcastic.*] Have I no right to ask?

GUILLEMETTE.

[*Crossing herself again, as if the devil might really appear; then laying her fingers on her lips and glancing mysteriously toward the bed.*] God bless my soul! Sh! Lower, unless you must wake him up!

THE DRAPER.

[*Very satirical.*] "Lower"? How "lower"? Shall I whisper it down in your ear? at the bottom of the well? or in the cellar?

GUILLEMETTE.

My goodness! What a babbler you are!

THE DRAPER.

[*In petulant protestation.*] Hang it all! Now, let me tell you, if you expect me to whisper. . . . [*Angrily.*] Say now! As for such wrangling, I'm not used to it. [*Bearing on each word.*] The truth is that Master Pierre took six yards of cloth to-day.

GUILLEMETTE.

[*Shrilly.*] Huh? Oh, come! To-day? Well, I never! Look here, now! Took what? . . . Hang me, if it isn't the sober truth! He's in such a plight, poor man, that he hasn't left his bed for eleven weeks—I believe you're making sport of us. Now, is there any reason in it? You clear out of my house! [*Wringing her hands.*] Oh, dear! oh, dear!

THE DRAPER.

You were telling me to speak so low! Holy Mother! you are shrieking!

GUILLEMETTE.

[*Almost in a whisper.*] Upon my soul, it's you who are making all the noise!

THE DRAPER.

Look here! I must be off. Hand over . . .

GUILLEMETTE.

[*Forgetting herself and letting her voice rise to a high key.*] Sh! Speak low, will you!

THE DRAPER.

But it's you who'll rouse him! Good Lord! You talk ten times louder than I do! [*Emphatically.*] We're wasting time.

GUILLEMETTE.

Eh? What is this? Are you cracked? or have you been drinking? In heaven's name!

THE DRAPER.

"Drinking"? My word! There's a pretty question!

GUILLEMETTE.

Oh, dear! Speak lower!

THE DRAPER.

[*Meekly.*] I ask payment for six yards of cloth, lady,—for pity's sake.

GUILLEMETTE.

It's all in your eye! And who did you give it to?

THE DRAPER.

To himself.

GUILLEMETTE.

Fine trim he's in for buying cloth! Alas! he can't budge. [*Begins to sob; the* DRAPER *thinks hard.*] He's in no need of clothes; never more will he be dressed in any garment, but a white one, nor leave the spot where he's lying unless he goes feet first.

THE DRAPER.

This must have happened since sunrise, then; for I'm sure I talked with him.

GUILLEMETTE.

[*Stopping her ears.*] Your voice is so shrill! Be quiet, for pity's sake!

THE DRAPER.

[*In a perfect tantrum.*] It's you, upon my oath! It's you! Oh, curses! This is torment. If some one paid me, I would go my way. Afore Heaven! It's always the way. Whenever I have trusted, this is what I've got for it.

PATELIN.

[*As if he had just awakened.*] Guillemette! A little rose-water! Prop me up! Tuck me in behind! Pah! No one's listening. The ewer! A drink! Rub the soles of my feet!

THE DRAPER.

I hear him there.

GUILLEMETTE.

You do.

PATELIN.

[*In his nightcap; peers out between the curtains and shouts to* GUILLEMETTE.] Ha, wretch! come here! Who told you to open those windows? Come, cover me! Drive these black men away! Marmara, carimari, carimara! Away with them! away!

GUILLEMETTE.

[*To* PATELIN.] What's this? How you behave! Are you beside yourself?

PATELIN.

[*Slowly getting out of bed and pointing, as he does so, toward the rafters. To the* DRAPER.] Thou canst not see what I perceive. There is a black monk—flying. Catch him! Give him a stole! [*Approaching the* DRAPER, *who retreats backward, he spits like a cat, turning his fingers into claws and striking as if he were going to scratch the* DRAPER'S *eyes out.*] The cat! the cat! meaow! [*Pointing, and seeming to follow the flight of the imaginary monk.*] Up, up, he goes!

GUILLEMETTE.

Oh, what is this? Ain't you ashamed! Dear, dear! this hubbub has upset him.

PATELIN.

[*Returning to bed and falling back on his pillow, exhausted. To* GUILLEMETTE, *who is bending over him.*] Those physicians have killed me with these hotchpotches they've made me drink. And yet, to believe them, it's as simple as moulding wax.

GUILLEMETTE.

[*To the* DRAPER.] Oh! Have a look at him, sir; he's such a sufferer.

THE DRAPER.

You don't mean to say he's fallen sick since just now, when he came from market?

GUILLEMETTE.

From market?

THE DRAPER.

Yes, ma'am. I think he was there. [*To* PATELIN.] I want my money for the cloth I let you have, Master Pierre.

PATELIN.

[*Pretending to take the* DRAPER *for a physician.*] Ho, Doctor John! . . . Can't you do something to help me? Shall I take another dose?

THE DRAPER.

Huh? How do I know? What business is it of mine? It's nine francs I want, or six crowns.

PATELIN.

These three black little pointed things,—I believe you call 'em "pills." They have ruined my jaws. For heaven's sake, Doctor John, no more of them! Pah! they're so bitter! They've made me let go of everything.

THE DRAPER.

They have not! by my father's soul! You haven't let go of my nine francs.

GUILLEMETTE.

[*Half aside.*] Hang them! these folks who are always meddling. [“*Shooing*” *the indignant but helpless* DRAPER.] Away with you, by all the devils!

THE DRAPER.

By the Lord who made me, I will have my cloth, or my nine francs!

PATELIN.

[*To the* DRAPER, *still pretending to take him for* “*Doctor John.*”] And my symptoms, do they not show, perchance, that I am dying? [*To* GUILLEMETTE.] Alas, although he stays, don't let me die!

GUILLEMETTE.

[*To the* DRAPER.] Begone! Isn't it wicked to be splitting his ears with your din?

THE DRAPER.

[*Throwing up both hands.*] Heaven rue the day it runs foul of him! [*To* PATELIN.] Six yards of cloth! Come, now! honestly, is it fair for me to lose 'em?

PATELIN.

Oh! Doctor John. This is awful! . . . I don't know how I keep on living.

THE DRAPER.

[*Shaking his fist.*] I want nine francs in full, I say, or by Saint Peter . . .

GUILLEMETTE.

Dear me! how you plague the man! How can you be so boisterous? You see clearly that he takes you for a physician. Alas! the poor Christian has had ill luck enough. Eleven weeks without a break he's been lying there, poor soul!

[*Clasps her hands and looks like the most dismal hypocrite;* PATELIN *rolls over with a groan.*

THE DRAPER.

[*Half to himself.*] Od's blood! [*Pause.*] I can't imagine how this mishap could have befallen him; for he came this very day and we struck a bargain,—at least it seemed to happen so, if I'm not mistaken.

GUILLEMETTE.

My good sir, there's something wrong with your memory. Really, I think you'd better go and rest a little; for lots of folks might gossip that you come in here on my account. Go away! The physicians will be here presently, and I wouldn't have any one suspect some impropriety.

THE DRAPER.

[*To himself.*] Oh, curse it all! So this is the fix I'm in. [*Mopping his brow. To* GUILLEMETTE.] I'll be bound! I still thought . . . You have no goose on the fire?

GUILLEMETTE.

Hark what he asks! Why, sir, that's no food for sick folks. Eat your own geese, and don't come here to play your silly tricks. I must say, you make yourself very much at home.

THE DRAPER.

Please don't take it amiss, for I verily believed . . .

GUILLEMETTE.

What? Still?

THE DRAPER.

[*Muttering.*] By the sacrament . . . [*To* GUILLEMETTE.] Good day! [*To himself.*] The deuce! Well, now I'll find out. [*Walks away slowly, muttering as he goes.*] I know full well that I ought to have six yards, all in one piece; but that woman has clean upset my wits. He took them; no doubt of it! [*After reflection.*] No, he did not. The devil! what *did* he do? I saw him in Death's clutch—or at least he's shamming death. [*Ponders again.*] Aye, by heaven, he did! No doubt of it; he took them and stowed them beneath his elbow!

[*After more reflection.*] No, he did not! It may be I am dreaming; yet, whether I be asleep or awake, it is not like me to give my goods to any man, however friendly he may be. I wouldn't have trusted any one. [*Angrily.*] Damme! he took them! and by the death . . . [*Reflecting.*] No, I have it! He did not! . . . Yet what am I coming to? [*Emphatically.*] He has them! [*After a slight pause he waves his arms desperately and bursts out.*] May the devil take both his body and his soul if I know who's got the best or the worst of it, they or myself! I'm all at sea. [*Exit.*

PATELIN.

[*Peeps out between the curtains; low to* GUILLEMETTE.] Is he gone?

GUILLEMETTE.

[*At the door.*] Hush! I'm listening. He's humming some little tune or other under his breath. By the way he mutters, one might suppose he was losing his mind.

PATELIN.

Haven't I lain here long enough? [*After a pause.*] He dropped in so punctually!

GUILLEMETTE.

[*Still listening.*] Maybe he will return. [PATELIN *starts to rise.*] No! Heaven forbid!

Lie still a while. It would be all up with us if he found you out of bed.

PATELIN.

He met his match, the distrustful skinflint! Served him right!

GUILLEMETTE.

[*Leaving her post.*] Of all the rank hucksters that ever were baited he is the gem! Oh, this is what he gets for ungodly stinginess.

[*She titters loudly.*

PATELIN.

For heaven's sake, stop laughing! If he came back, he might play the mischief, and, let me tell you, we haven't seen the last of him.

GUILLEMETTE.

I declare! Let anybody who can keep from laughing; I can't help it! [*Laughs uproariously.*] When I think of the face he made as he looked at you . . . [*Laughs.*] He dunned so fiercely! [*Laughs again.*

PATELIN.

Quit your cackling! If some one should overhear you we might as well skip out: he's such a crusty rogue.

[*Knocking is heard at the door* L.

THE DRAPER.

[*Pounding angrily on the door.*] Ho, there! mis'ess: where are you hiding?

GUILLEMETTE.

My word! he's heard me! [*Looking through the keyhole.*] He seems to be going mad.

PATELIN.

[*In bed; draws the curtains together.*] I'll make believe I'm delirious. Let him in.

GUILLEMETTE.

[*Opening the door and trying to look serious.*] How you yell!

THE DRAPER.

[*Entering noisily.*] By the holy light that shines, that freshwater barrister shall pay me. Pooh! That income of his! A likely yarn! He has my cloth, the swindler! Ha! a drunken pettifogger! [*Sneering.*] A quack! [*Ironically.*] The rest of us are brainless clowns, forsooth! No one was ever fitter to be hanged! [*Turning and catching sight of* GUILLEMETTE *trying to suppress her amusement.*] Ah ha! you're laughing, eh?

GUILLEMETTE.

[*Trying to check her laughter.*] My stars! What do you think I've got to laugh about?

There isn't an unhappier creature under the sun. He's passing away. Never did you hear such a storming, such a frenzy. His mind is still astray; he raves, he sings, and then he babbles and mutters in so many languages! He won't live half an hour. Upon my soul, I laugh and weep in the same breath.

THE DRAPER.

I know nothing about your laughter or your weeping. To cut it short, I must be paid!

GUILLEMETTE.

For what? Are you daft? Are you beginning to rant again?

THE DRAPER.

[*Haughtily.*] I am not wont to be thus spoken to when I am selling my cloth. Would you have me believe the moon is made of green cheese?

PATELIN.

[*Standing on the bed, as if framed between the curtains.*] Now then! the Queen of the Gitterns! [*Gesture as if playing one.*] Quick! Fetch her here! I know well she has given birth to four and twenty gitternkins by the abbot of Ivernaux: I must stand godfather for him.

GUILLEMETTE.

Alas! Think about God the Father, my dear, not about gitterns or gitternkins.

THE DRAPER.

[*Aside.*] Ha! What a pair of humbugs! [*Exploding.*] Quick now! I want pay for the cloth that you got of me.

GUILLEMETTE.

La! If you made one mistake, aren't you satisfied?

THE DRAPER.

[*Appealing.*] What can I do, dear friend? So help me God! I'm not aware of a mistake. . . . [*Indignantly.*] Come now! Pay, or be hanged! [*Whining.*] How do I wrong you if I come here to ask for what is mine? For by Saint Peter . . .

GUILLEMETTE.

Alas! How you rack the man! [*Inspired.*] I see by your looks that your mind is not sound. [*Scanning him closely.*] As sure as I'm a sinner, if I had help I'd tie you fast; you've gone stark mad.

THE DRAPER.

[*Desperately.*] Oh, dear, oh, dear! I am beside myself.

GUILLEMETTE.

How can you say such things! Cross yourself! Bénédicité! [*Insisting.*] Make the sign of the cross!

THE DRAPER.

Hang me if ever I trust anybody with . . . [*He begins to speak brokenly, hearing noises from the bed, where* PATELIN *is about to have a fresh frenzy*] . . . cloth . . . this . . . year . . . Godamercy! What an invalid!

PATELIN.

[*Leaping down from his bed and striding about, performing, meanwhile, various wild antics which the* DRAPER *observes with amazement.*] Mere de diou, la coronade,—par fye, y m'en voul anar.—Or renague biou, outre mar. Ventre de diou! zendict gigone,—çastuy ça rible et res ne done.—Ne carillaine, fuy ta none,—que de l'argent il ne me sone! If it's ducats, mum is the word. [*To the* DRAPER.] Have you understood, fair coz?

GUILLEMETTE.

[*To the* DRAPER.] He once had an uncle near Limoges, a brother of his aunt-in-law. That, I take it, is why he jabbers in the gibberish of Limousin.

THE DRAPER.

Out on you! He stole away with my cloth under his arm-pit.

PATELIN.

[*Taking* GUILLEMETTE *by the hand and starting to lead her away in princely fashion.*] Venez ens, douce damiselle. [*Pointing to the* DRAPER.] Toadspawn! what's it after? [*Haughtily commanding the* DRAPER *to draw back.*] Avaunt, scullion, avaunt! [*While the* DRAPER *stares* PATELIN *strides across the room, snatches up an old gown of* GUILLEMETTE'S, *and in very short order gets himself up as a priest; he then addresses his bewildered visitor in exclamative or questioning tones.*] Hither! Hasten! Devil, come look at this old monkery. Heh! fault il que ly prestre rie, quant il deüst canter se messe?

GUILLEMETTE.

Alas! alas! it will soon be time to give him the extreme unction.

THE DRAPER.

But how does he happen to speak the Picard tongue? Whence comes this foolishness?

GUILLEMETTE.

His mother was raised in Picardy; so he speaks Picard now.

PATELIN.

[*Going toward the* DRAPER.] Whence comest thou, merry reveler? Wacarme! liefve godeman. Henriey, Henriey, conselapen. [*Takes the* DRAPER'S *hands and goes dancing about the room, singing.*] Grile, grile, scohehonden —zilop, zilop, en mon que bonden,—Disticlien unen desen versen,—mat groet festal ou truit den hersen. [*As he gives the astounded* DRAPER *a final twirl,* PATELIN *trips himself, falls, and lies on his back with only enough strength left to gasp; but in this posture he soon gets breath to continue his linguistic antics.*] Vuste vuille pour le frimas! [*Kneels as if at a confessional.*] Bring brother Thomas to confess me.

THE DRAPER.

What's this? He'll keep on all day talking foreign languages. If he would only give me my money or a security, I would go.

GUILLEMETTE.

Bless my soul! . . . Oh, dear me! How queer you are! What would you expect? How can you be so stubborn?

PATELIN.

[*To the* DRAPER.] Or cha, Renouart au Tiné!—Bé deá, que ma couille est pelouse! [*The* DRAPER, *determined to get his money by hook or by crook, takes hold of* PATELIN'S *gown*

and gives it a pull. PATELIN *wiggles his toes.*] Zounds! what's after me now? Esse une vaque ?—une mousque ? ou ung escarbot ? [*The* DRAPER *retreats.* PATELIN *crouches behind the bench, with only his head visible.*] Bé deá! Wow! J'é le mau saint Garbot!—Suis je des foyreux de Baieux ?

THE DRAPER.

How can he stand the strain of so much talking? [*Witnessing fresh antics.*] Ho! he's losing his wits! But how comes he to speak Norman?

GUILLEMETTE.

His schoolmaster was a Norman; so in his last hour the memory of it comes back to him. [*Further capers by* PATELIN.] He's giving up the ghost!

THE DRAPER.

[*In dismay.*] Heavens! This is the worst raving that ever I ran across. [*To* GUILLEMETTE.] I never should have thought he was not this day at market!

GUILLEMETTE.

[*Astonished.*] You thought so?

THE DRAPER.

Yes, hanged if I didn't; but I see that isn't what happened, at all.

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PATELIN.

[*Listening, as if he heard some noise in the street.*] Sont il ung asne que j'os braire? Is it a donkey I hear braying? [*Sputtering, as if another frenzy were coming on.*] Ha oul dandaoul en ravezeie—Corfha en euf.

[PATELIN *pulls his gown over his head so as to resemble an old hag. Meanwhile* GUILLEMETTE *and the* DRAPER, *clinging to each other, await the next occurrence with a horror in one case shammed, in the other real. Hearing a weird sound from behind the bench,* GUILLEMETTE *cries out, with clasped hands.*

GUILLEMETTE.

God help you!

PATELIN.

[*Picks up a broom, and with the handle makes cabalistic figures on the floor, draws a circle round the* DRAPER; *then sits astride his broom and goes prancing off like a witch, continuing his mutterings.*] Huis oz bezou dronc nos badou—Digaut an tan en hol madou—Maz rehet crux dan holcon—So ol oz merveil il grant nacon—Aluzen archet epysy—Har cals amour ha coureisy.

THE DRAPER.

Alas! Blest Heaven! Hearken to it! He's sinking. How he gurgles! [*To* GUILLEMETTE.] But what is he sputtering about? How he mutters! Od's bodykin! he mumbles so I cannot catch a word of it. This is not Christian, nor any other tongue, apparently.

GUILLEMETTE.

It's Breton. His grandmother on his father's side came from Brittany. [PATELIN *shows signs of exhaustion.*] He's dying! I must send for a priest.

PATELIN.

[*Still astride the broom; to the* DRAPER.] Hé par Gigon, tu te mens.—Vualx te deu, couille de Lorraine! [*Starts to explain the cabalistic figures to the* DRAPER, *who retreats in alarm.* PATELIN *pursues him, whacking the floor and furniture with his broom. Finally, as the* DRAPER, *breathless, takes refuge behind a chair,* PATELIN *addresses him in Latin.*] Et bona dies sit vobis,—magister amantissime,—pater reverendissime,—quomodo brulis? que nova?—Parisius non sunt ova! [*To* GUILLEMETTE.] Quid petit ille mercator?—Dicat sibi quod trufator,—ille qui in lecto jacet,—vult ei dare, si placet,—de oca ad comedendum.

[*Falls on the floor. The* DRAPER, *who*

has regained some of his courage, helps GUILLEMETTE *to put* PATELIN *to bed, bolstering him up with pillows.* PATELIN *continues to mutter.*

GUILLEMETTE.

Upon my word, he will die a-talking! How he froths! [*To the* DRAPER.] Don't you see how he's steaming? [*Casting her eyes aloft.*] Now his human part is going to its heavenly home. [*Hiding her face in her hands.*] Now I shall be left alone, poor and forlorn.

THE DRAPER.

[*Aside.*] Perhaps I'd better go away before he breathes his last. [*To* GUILLEMETTE.] I fear he might be loth, while he is dying, to tell you any secrets in my presence, though he would in privacy. [*Aside.*] By all the saints! I'm flummuxed worse than ever. [*After a short pause.*] The Devil, in his stead, took my cloth to tempt me! Bénédicité! [*Crosses himself.*] May he leave me in peace! And since the case so stands, I give the cloth in God's name to whosoever took it. Pardon; for I take my oath I thought he had got my cloth. Good-bye, ma'am; may God forgive me!

GUILLEMETTE.

[*Showing him out.*] Heaven bless you—and his poor mournful wife! [*Exit* DRAPER.

PATELIN.

[*Jumping out of bed and waving his hand after the departing* DRAPER.] Go along with you! [*To* GUILLEMETTE.] How do you like me for a teacher? [*Peeping into the street.*] Crackbrains is making for home. [*Taps his head significantly.*] Heavens! he has rooms to let! . . . He'll see spooks this night.

GUILLEMETTE.

[*Gaily.*] How he was bamboozled! And didn't I do my part well?

PATELIN.

"Well?" You're an angel! Now we've got cloth enough to have some clothes!

[*With this,* PATELIN *pulls the stolen cloth from the bed, where it has lain hidden, wraps one end round his body and flings the whole strip so that it lies unfolded when it reaches* GUILLEMETTE'S *feet. She grasps her end and whirls so that she and* PATELIN *are close together when the curtain falls.*

TABLEAU CURTAIN

[*The curtain rises at the* DRAPER'S *shop.*

THE DRAPER.

That's the way! Everybody stuffs me with lies. Everybody carries off my goods, and takes

what he can get. Of all unlucky men I am the king. The very shepherds cheat me; but mine, whom I have always treated kindly, shall be sorry for flouting me! By heaven, he shall smart for it!

THE SHEPHERD.

[*Appearing unexpectedly from the left of the market-place. On being seen by his master, he removes his cap and bows; then begins to speak with the thick dull drawl of a yokel.*] God give you a good day, sweet master, and a good evening!

THE DRAPER.

Oho! So it's thou, foul churl. A good fellow thou art; aye, good for the gallows!

THE SHEPHERD.

[*Resting his crook on the ground and stopping about five feet from the* DRAPER.] I ax your pardon, master, but some one or other in striped hosen, which were right disorderly, and he had a rod in his hand, yet no lash on it, said to me, says he . . . yet I don't remember at all well what it may be, to tell the truth. He spoke to me of you, master, and of some summons or other. As for me, Lord! much I know what it's all about. He muddled me a-talking about ewes and court in the afternoon. And he raised a great hullaballoo for you, master . . .

Le Diappier

quoy dea chaſcun me paiſt de lobes
chaſcun men porte mon auoir
et prent ce quil en peuſt auoir
or ſuis ie le roy des meſchans
meſment les bergiers des champs
me cabuſent ores le mien
aqui iay touſiours fait du bien
il ne ma pas pour bien gabbe

The Shepard comes to explain

THE DRAPER.

[*Shaking his fist in the face of the* SHEPHERD, *who cowers against the wall.*] If I don't have thee hauled forthwith before the judge, may I be drowned and blasted! Never shalt thou kill one beast, by my oath, but thou remember it! Anyhow, thou shalt pay me for the six yards . . . I mean for slaughtering my sheep, and the havoc thou hast wrought me these ten years past.

THE SHEPHERD.

Don't believe the slanders, my good master; for, upon my soul . . .

THE DRAPER.

And by heaven! before Saturday thou shalt give me back my six yards of wool . . . I mean what was taken from my sheep.

THE SHEPHERD.

What wool? Ah, master! I believe you are angry over some other thing. By Saint Lupus! master, I fear to speak when I look at you.

THE DRAPER.

Leave me in peace! Out of my sight!—if thou art wise. And thou hadst better be on hand.

THE SHEPHERD.

Master, let us agree. For God's sake, don't go to law about it.

THE DRAPER.

[*Waving him off.*] Begone! Thy business is in a pretty pass! [*Yelling and shaking his fist in the* SHEPHERD'S *face.*] Begone! I say. I'll make no agreement, nor settle anything, save as the judge shall do. [*He drives the* SHEPHERD *out.*] Yah! Unless I'm wary, everyone will be swindling me from now on!

THE SHEPHERD.

[*As the* DRAPER *enters his shop.*] God be wi' you, sir, and give you joy! [*Crossing the market-place; to himself.*] So I must defend myself. [*Exit,* L. U.

TABLEAU CURTAIN

[*The curtain rises at* PATELIN'S *house. Knocking is heard at the door* L.

PATELIN.

Hang me, if he isn't coming back!

GUILLEMETTE.

No, he is not; mercy on me! that would be the very worst. [*Exit.*

THE SHEPHERD.

[*As* PATELIN *opens the door.*] God be with you! God bless you!

PATELIN.

God keep thee! What wilt thou, my good fellow?

THE SHEPHERD.

They will fine me for default unless I appear for trial. And, if you like, you will come, sweet master, and defend me; for I know nothing. And I will pay you well, even though I be ill clad.

PATELIN.

Come hither, now. Speak up! Which art thou?—plaintiff? or defendant?

THE SHEPHERD.

I have business with a dealer—do you understand, sweet master?—whose ewes I have for a great while led to pasture and watched for him. Now, sir, upon my word, I saw he paid me scantily. . . . Shall I tell everything?

PATELIN.

To be sure! A client should hide nothing from his counsel.

THE SHEPHERD.

It is true, sir, beyond denial, that I whacked 'em on the skull for him, so that time and again they went into a swoon and fell dead; no matter how strong and sound they were. And then, lest he should lay it to me, I gave him to

understand that they died of the scab. "Ho!" quoth he, "take the scabby one away from the others; off with her!" "Right willingly!" quoth I; [*Leering*] but that was done otherwise; for, by Saint John! I ate 'em, knowing well what they wanted. Well, sir, this went on so long, and I slaughtered so many, that he found it out. And when he saw he was being deceived,—God help me!—he set somebody to spy; for you hear them bleat very loud, you understand, when it's going on. So I've been caught red-handed; I can't deny it. Now I beseech you—for my part I have money enough—that we two steal a march on him. I know well he has the law on his side, but you will find some loophole, if you try, so as to give him the worst of it.

PATELIN.

[*Coaxingly.*] What will you give me if I upset the plaintiff's case and you are acquitted?

THE SHEPHERD.

I will pay you not in copper, but in fine gold crowns.

PATELIN.

Then your case shall be a good one. And were it twice as bad, so much the better! and the sooner I shall do for him! [*Slight pause.*] Come hither! [*Slight pause.*] Art thou crafty enough to understand a trick? What is thy name?

THE SHEPHERD.

Tibalt Lambkin.

PATELIN.

[*Jocularly.*] Lambkin, hast thou filched many a sucking lamb from thy master?

THE SHEPHERD.

My word! it's quite likely I have eaten above thirty in three years.

PATELIN.

Ten yearly to pay for dice and candles. [*Aside.*] I believe I shall let him have it fair! [*Aloud.*] Dost think he can find any one forthwith to prove his facts? That's what the case hinges on.

THE SHEPHERD.

Prove, sir? Blessèd Mary! By all the saints in Paradise! instead of one he'll have a dozen witnesses against me!

PATELIN.

That's a bad feature in thy case. [*Slight pause.*] Here is what I had in mind. I'll feign to know naught of thee, that I never laid eyes on thee before.

THE SHEPHERD.

[*In dismay.*] Lord, no! not that!

PATELIN.

No, then I won't. But here is what you must do. If you talk, they will trap you every time, and in such cases confessions are most prejudicial, and so harmful that it's the very devil. Here is the trick! As soon as they call on you for trial, answer nothing but *ba-a-a* [*Mimicking a sheep's bleat*], whatever they say to you. And if they happen to curse you, saying, "Ha, filthy fool! a plague on you, villain! Are you flouting the court?" go *ba-a*. "Oh!" I'll say, "he's half-witted; he thinks he's talking to his sheep!" But even if they split their heads with roaring, not another word! Beware!

THE SHEPHERD.

I take it to heart, and truly I will be wary, and I will do it properly, I promise and affirm.

PATELIN.

Now heed! No flinching! And whatever I say or do, give me no other answer.

THE SHEPHERD.

I? By my sacrament! call me a fool outright if I utter to-day another word, to you or to any one, whatsoever they say to me, but only *ba-a*, as you have taught me.

PATELIN.

By Saint John! There is the prank to out-

wit your adversary! [*In a tone between wheedling and threat.*] But when it's done, pay me a right good fee.

THE SHEPHERD.

Master, if I do not pay as agreed, never trust me. But I pray, look carefully to my business.

PATELIN.

By'r Lady of Boulogne, the Judge must be holding court; for he's always on hand by six o'clock, or thereabouts. Now come along with me, but we will not take the same road.

THE SHEPHERD.

Quite so! [*Shrewdly.*] They mustn't see that you're my lawyer.

PATELIN.

[*Threateningly.*] By'r Lady! Mind your skin, if you don't pay handsomely!

THE SHEPHERD.

Why! as agreed, sir; never fear. [*Exit*, L.

PATELIN.

[*Alone.*] Oh, well, half a loaf is better than no loaf at all. I shall hook a minnow, anyhow; and if he is lucky, he will give me a crown or so for my pains.

[*Follows the* SHEPHERD *out.*

CURTAIN

THE THIRD ACT

SCENE.—*In the market-place. Enter* JUDGE, *followed by a* CLERK, *a score of* ARCHERS, BAILIFFS, *and* LOITERERS, *who range themselves to the right and left of the market-cross, so as to leave an open space before the* JUDGE'S *seat. The* JUDGE *sits down and surveys the crowd, in which are* PATELIN *and the* SHEPHERD.

PATELIN.

[*Removing his hat; to the* JUDGE.] God bless you, sir, and grant you your heart's desire!

THE JUDGE.

Welcome, sir! But cover yourself. [*Points.*] There! Take a seat.

PATELIN.

[*Hiding in the crowd, to avoid being seen by the* DRAPER, *whose breathless approach brings to him the sudden realization that the* SHEPHERD'S *adversary is the very person whom he has himself beguiled.*] Oh, I'm all right, sir, if you please; there's more room here.

THE JUDGE.

[*Brusquely.*] If there's business, have done with it, in order that the court may adjourn.

THE DRAPER.

[*Arriving much flurried, just as the* JUDGE *has spoken.*] My lawyer is coming, your worship. He is finishing a little work that he was at, and it would be kind of you to wait for him.

THE JUDGE.

[*Testily.*] Come, come! I have business elsewhere. If the offending party is here, set forth your case at once. Are you not the plaintiff?

THE DRAPER.

I am.

THE JUDGE.

[*Casting his eyes about.*] Where is the defendant? Is he present in person?

THE DRAPER.

[*Pointing at the* SHEPHERD.] Yes, there he is, keeping mum; but God knows he has plenty to think about.

THE JUDGE.

[*To the* DRAPER.] Since you are both here, make known your suit.

Vous feries bien de la tendre

Le iuge

He dea ie ailleurs a entendre
se Voſtre partie eſt preſente
deliures Vous ſans plus datente
et neſtes Vous pas demandeur

Le drappier

Si ſuis

The court scene

THE DRAPER.

This, then, is what I am bringing an action against him for. Your Worship, the truth is that for the love of God, and out of charity, I reared him in his childhood; and when I saw that he was strong enough to work in the fields, to cut it short, I made him my shepherd and set him to watching my flock; but as true as you are sitting there, your Worship, he has wrought such havoc among my ewes and wethers that, no mistaking, he . . .

THE JUDGE.

[*Officious.*] Now listen! Wasn't he in your hire?

PATELIN.

[*Breaking in, ostensibly to show that the* JUDGE *has made a good point.*] Aye, that's it! For had he kept him for pure sport, without hire . . .

THE DRAPER.

[*Recognizing* PATELIN, *who hides his face behind his hand.*] Devil get me! If it's not you, and no mistake!

THE JUDGE.

[*To* PATELIN.] How's this? Why do you hold your hand up? Have you a toothache, Master Pierre?

PATELIN.

[*Wincing.*] Yes, my teeth are raising such a row that I never felt worse pains. I daren't lift my head. [*Waving one hand.*] For God's sake, make him proceed!

THE JUDGE.

[*To the* DRAPER.] Go on. Finish your charge. Come! Conclude promptly.

THE DRAPER.

[*Aside, and staring at* PATELIN.] By the holy rood, 'tis he and no other! [*To* PATELIN.] It was you I sold six yards of cloth to, Master Pierre!

THE JUDGE.

[*To* PATELIN.] What is he saying about cloth?

PATELIN.

[*To the* JUDGE.] He's rambling. He means to come to the point, but he can't find his way to it, for he lacks the training.

THE DRAPER.

[*Half choked with indignation.*] Hang me, if anybody else took my cloth.

PATELIN.

[*To the* JUDGE.] How the wretched man lugs in his inventions to make out a case! The pig-headed fellow means, of course, that his shepherd had sold the wool that went into the cloth that made my garment, by saying that he is robbing him, and that he stole the wool of his sheep.

THE DRAPER.

[*To* PATELIN.] Hang me, if you haven't it!

THE JUDGE.

[*To the* DRAPER.] In the devil's name, be still! You are twaddling. Can you not return to the subject without delaying the court by such drivel?

PATELIN.

[*With one hand still on his jaw.*] My teeth ache so; yet I must laugh! [*Looking toward the* DRAPER.] He's already in such haste that he doesn't know where he left off. We must set him right again.

THE JUDGE.

[*To the* DRAPER.] Come! Let's stick to those sheep! What happened?

THE DRAPER.

[*Is about to return to his sheep, when* PATELIN, *by stepping in front of him, diverts his attention; whereupon he shakes his fist at* PATELIN *and at the same time appeals to the* JUDGE.] He took six yards, worth nine francs!

THE JUDGE.

[*Bawling.*] Are we greenhorns? or tom-fools? Where do you think you are?

PATELIN.

[*To the* JUDGE.] Od's blood! He takes us for ganders, I suppose! Oh, he looks so very good! but let me advise that his opponent be examined a bit.

THE JUDGE.

[*Regaining his composure.*] Very true! He is familiar with the man; he must know him. [*To the* SHEPHERD.] Step forward. Speak.

THE SHEPHERD.

[*Shambling forward and looking very dull.*] *Ba-a!*

THE JUDGE.

Hoity-toity! Here's a mess! What is this *ba-a?* Am I a goat? Speak to me!

THE SHEPHERD.

Ba-a!

THE JUDGE.

A plague on you! Ha! Are you flouting us?

PATELIN.

[*To the* JUDGE.] Believe me, he's crazy, or stupid, or he fancies he's among his sheep.

THE DRAPER.

[*Wildly, to* PATELIN.] Damme if you are not the very man that took it,—my cloth, I mean. [*To the* JUDGE.] Oh, you can't imagine, sir, by what deceit . . .

THE JUDGE.

[*Threatening.*] Hold your tongue! Are you an idiot? Leave that matter alone, and let's come to the point!

THE DRAPER.

True, your Worship; but the circumstance concerns me; yet on my faith I'll not utter another word about it. [*Half aside.*] Another time it may be different. I shall have to swallow it whole. [*To the* JUDGE.] Well, as I was saying, I gave six yards [*The* JUDGE *starts up*] . . . I mean, my sheep . . . pray, sir,

forgive me . . . this fine lawyer . . . my shepherd, when he ought to have been in the fields . . . [*Shaking his fist at* PATELIN *and appealing frantically to the* JUDGE.] He told me I should have six crowns in gold, as soon as I came . . . [*As the* JUDGE *threatens*] . . . I mean, three years ago my shepherd gave me his word that he would watch over my flock loyally and do me no damage to it, nor any villainy, and then . . . [*Seeing* PATELIN] now he denies me outright both cloth and money. [*To* PATELIN.] Oh, Master Pierre, truly . . . [*Catches a warning frown from the* JUDGE.] That scoundrel robbed me of the wool of my sheep; and healthy though they were, he killed them, and made them die by pounding out their brains . . . [*Again* PATELIN *distracts his attention.*] When he had tucked my cloth under his armpit he hurried off, saying I should go and get six gold crowns at his house.

THE JUDGE.

There is neither rime nor reason in all your railing. What does it mean? Now you interlard one thing, now another. In short, 'fore God, I can make neither head nor tail of it. [*To* PATELIN.] He muddles something about cloth and prattles next of sheep, helter skelter. What can he be driving at?

PATELIN.

Now, I undertake that he is keeping back the poor shepherd's wage.

THE DRAPER.

[*To* PATELIN.] By heaven, you might hold your tongue! My cloth . . . as true as gospel . . . I know where my shoe pinches better than you or any one. I swear you have it!

THE JUDGE.

[*To the* DRAPER.] What has he?

THE DRAPER.

Nothing, sir. [*Again bursts out.*] Upon my oath, he is the greatest swindler . . . [*The* JUDGE *threatens.*] Oh, I'll be silent about it, if I can, and not speak of it again, whatever happens.

THE JUDGE.

No! But remember! Now finish speedily.

PATELIN.

[*To the* JUDGE.] This shepherd can't answer the charge without counsel; yet he is afraid, or doesn't know how to ask for it. If you were willing to order me to take his case, I would.

THE JUDGE.

[*Ironically.*] His case? You'd get cold comfort out of that, I should imagine. It's hardly worth while.

PATELIN.

But, honestly, I don't care to make anything out of it; let it be done for charity! [*Turning toward the* SHEPHERD.] Now I'm going to find out from the poor lad what he will tell me, and whether, perchance, he may afford me matter for his defence. He'd have a hard time getting out of it if nobody came to his rescue. [*To the* SHEPHERD.] Come hither, my friend. [*With an utterly vacant expression the* SHEPHERD *slouches forward a step or two, with his crook in one hand, and his cap in the other.*] If any one could find . . . dost thou understand?

THE SHEPHERD.

Ba-a!

PATELIN.

[*Feigning astonishment.*] *Ba-a?* The devil! What *ba-a?* Zounds! Art thou crazy? Tell me thy business.

THE SHEPHERD.

Ba-a-a!

PATELIN.

How *ba-a?* Dost thou hear thy ewes a-bleating? Mind, it is to thine interest.

THE SHEPHERD.

Ba-a!

PATELIN.

[*Entreating.*] Now speak! Say *yes*, and *no*. [*Whispering.*] Well done! Keep it up!

THE SHEPHERD.

[*Softly.*] *Ba-a!*

PATELIN.

Louder, or it may cost thee dear.

THE SHEPHERD.

[*Very loud.*] *Ba-a-a!*

PATELIN.

[*As, with a despairing gesture, he appeals to the* JUDGE.] The maddest man is he who drives such a born fool into court! Oh, sir! send him back to his ewes: he's a fool by nature.

THE DRAPER.

[*To* PATELIN.] A fool, you say? Bah! he has more sense than you!

PATELIN.

[*To the* JUDGE.] Send him away to watch over his flocks,—never to return. A plague on whoever cites such a lackbrains into court!

THE DRAPER.

[*To the* JUDGE.] And he is to be sent away before I can be heard?

PATELIN.

[*To the* DRAPER.] So help me! Yes; since he's out of his mind. Why not?

THE DRAPER.

[*To the* JUDGE.] Oh, now, sir; at least allow me first to have my say. What I have to tell you is no trumpery, nor scoffing.

THE JUDGE.

Vexation is all that comes of having dolts on trial, either male or female. Listen! To cut the matter short, the court will adjourn.

THE DRAPER.

[*Wistfully.*] Shall they go away without ever having to appear again?

THE JUDGE.

[*Gathering up his robe.*] Well, now what . . .

PATELIN.

[*To the* JUDGE.] Appear again! You never saw a madder man, neither in his acts nor in his answers. [*Pointing to the* DRAPER.] And he is not a whit better. Both are fools. I'll be blessed! between them they haven't a penny-weight of brains!

THE DRAPER.

[*Shaking his fist at* PATELIN.] You carried it off by lying,—that cloth, I mean,—and without paying for it, Master Pierre. 'Fore God, that was the work of no upright man.

PATELIN.

[*To the crowd.*] Suffering Saints! If he isn't mad already, he is going mad.

THE DRAPER.

[*To* PATELIN.] I know you by your speech, and by your dress. I am not mad: I am sound enough to know who does right by me. [*To the* JUDGE.] I will tell you the whole matter, sir; upon my word I will!

PATELIN.

[*To the* JUDGE.] Oh, sir! Bid him be quiet! [*To the* DRAPER.] Aren't you ashamed to wrangle so with this poor shepherd over three or four measly sheep not worth two buttons! [*To the crowd.*] He makes more ado . . .

THE DRAPER.

[*Storming and shaking his fists.*] What sheep? [*With an expression of weariness and indignation he gives a couple of turns to an imaginary crank.*] A hurdy-gurdy! Always the same old tune! [*Shaking his finger in* PATELIN'S *face.*] It's to yourself I'm talking,—to you! and by all that's holy you shall give it back to me!

THE JUDGE.

Look you! I am lucky! [*To the crowd.*] He will never stop bawling!

THE DRAPER.

[*To the* JUDGE.] I ask him . . .

[*General uproar among the bystanders.*

PATELIN.

[*To the* JUDGE.] Make them be quiet! [*To the* DRAPER.] Oh, goodness! Give that song a rest! Suppose he has banged six or seven, or a dozen, and eaten them. Fie! That is hard on you! You've earned more than that while he's been keeping them.

THE DRAPER.

[*To the* JUDGE.] Mark, sir! Mark! When I talk to him of cloth, he answers with his shepherd fooleries! [*To* PATELIN.] Six yards

of cloth that you put under your armpit and walked off with—where are they? Do you mean to give them back to me?

PATELIN.

[*To the* JUDGE.] Oh, sir! Would you have him hanged for six or seven sheep? At least, sir, take time to catch your breath. Don't be so harsh to a forlorn shepherd, who's as naked as a worm.

THE DRAPER.

A pretty way to change the subject! It was the devil made me sell cloth to such a customer! [*To the* JUDGE.] Oh, now, your Worship, I ask him . . .

THE JUDGE.

[*To the* DRAPER.] I acquit him of your charge and forbid you to proceed. A great honour it is to have a lunatic in court! [*To the* SHEPHERD.] Go back to your sheep!

THE SHEPHERD.

Ba-a!

THE JUDGE.

[*To the* DRAPER.] You show well what you are, sir, by's death!

THE DRAPER.

Oh, sir, upon my soul, I wish . . .

PATELIN.

[*To the bystanders.*] Could he stop?

THE DRAPER.

[*Turning upon* PATELIN.] And my business is with you! You cheated me and carried off my cloth by stealth and with your smooth talk . . .

PATELIN.

[*To the* JUDGE.] I cross my heart! Why, do you hear him, sir?

THE DRAPER.

[*To* PATELIN.] God help me, you're the most arrant trickster . . . [*To the* JUDGE.] Your Worship, whatever they may say . . .

THE JUDGE.

You are a pair of idiots, both of you! It's naught but wrangling. [*He rises.*] Yah! It is about time to be leaving. [*To the* SHEPHERD.] Get thee gone, my friend, and never return, whatever bailiff serves a warrant on thee. The court acquits thee. Dost thou comprehend?

PATELIN.

[*To the* SHEPHERD.] Say "I thank you, sir."

THE SHEPHERD.

Ba-a!

THE JUDGE.

[*To the* SHEPHERD.] I mean it. Never mind! Begone! [*Half to himself.*] It's just as well.

THE DRAPER.

Is it fair that he should go away like this?

THE JUDGE.

[*With a snort of disgust.*] Huh! I have business elsewhere. [*Both to* PATELIN *and to the* DRAPER.] You are by all odds too fond of jibes. You shall keep me no longer: I am going. [*To* PATELIN.] Will you come and sup with me, Master Pierre?

PATELIN.

[*Puts his hand over his mouth and winces, as if his teeth were still aching.*] I cannot.

[*Exit* JUDGE, *followed by the throng of* ARCHERS, BAILIFFS, LOITERERS, *etc.*

THE DRAPER.

[*To* PATELIN.] A downright robber! that's what you are! Say! Am I going to be paid?

PATELIN.

For what? Is your mind wandering? Why, who do you think I am? By my heel! I was wondering who you took me for.

THE DRAPER.

Pah!

PATELIN.

My dear sir, wait a bit. I'll tell you right now who you think you take me for. Maybe it's for Brainless? [*With one hand* PATELIN *removes his hat; with the other he points to his bald spot.*] Look! [*Deprecatingly.*] Nay, nay! He isn't bald, as I am, on top of his pate.

THE DRAPER.

You mean to take me for a blockhead, eh? 'Tis you, as sure as I'm alive,—you yourself. Your voice proves it, and I know it's so.

PATELIN.

What! Me myself? Nay; truly it isn't. Guess once more. Mightn't it be Jean de Noyon? He's shaped like me.

THE DRAPER.

Ugh! He has no such guzzling, sodden face. Didn't I leave you sick in bed a short while since?

PATELIN.

Ho! There you have it! Sick? And with what malady? Own up to being a jackanapes,—as clearly enough you are!

THE DRAPER.

It's you; by Saint Peter's bones! You! and nobody else! I know it for a fact.

PATELIN.

Now, don't you believe anything of the sort! For it's not me, at all. I never took a yard, nor even half a yard, from you. It's likely I would do such a thing!

THE DRAPER.

[*Looking blank.*] Hm! I'm going to have a look at your house, to see whether you are there. There's no use in our worrying our heads about it any longer here, if I find you there.

PATELIN.

By'r Lady! Now you have it! That is the way to find out. [*Exit* DRAPER, R. U.

PATELIN.

[*Turning to* SHEPHERD, L.] Say, Lambkin!

THE SHEPHERD.

Ba-a!

PATELIN.

[*Beckoning.*] Come hither. Come. Was thy business well done?

[THE SHEPHERD *does not move;* PATELIN *starts to approach him.*

THE SHEPHERD.

[*Edging off.*] *Ba-a!*

PATELIN.

[*Stopping, apprehensive lest the* SHEPHERD *may take to flight.*] The plaintiff's gone now. Cease thy *ba-a;* it's no longer needed. [*Coaxingly.*] Didn't I trounce him? Didn't I counsel thee just right?

THE SHEPHERD.

Ba-a-a!

PATELIN.

[*Drawing a step or two closer.*] Come, come! Nobody will overhear you. Speak right out. You needn't fear.

THE SHEPHERD.

[*Looking for an outlet.*] *Ba-a!*

PATELIN.

[*Firmly.*] It is time for me to be going. Pay me!

THE SHEPHERD.

[*Just audibly.*] *Ba-a!*

PATELIN.

[*Patting the* SHEPHERD, *and in a beguiling tone.*] To say truth, you did your part prettily, and your behavior was first rate. What left him in the lurch was the way you kept from laughing.

THE SHEPHERD.

[*Bleating a little louder.*] *Ba-a-a!*

PATELIN.

Why *ba-a?* It's not needed any longer. [*Holds out his hand.*] Come! Pay me well and nicely.

THE SHEPHERD.

Ba-a!

PATELIN.

Why *ba-a?* Talk sensibly, and pay me; then I will go my way.

THE SHEPHERD.

[*Still louder.*] *Ba-a-a!*

PATELIN.

Let me tell you something. Can you guess what I am going to say? Please pay me without further *baa*ing. I've had enough of your *ba-a.* [*Holding out his hand.*] Pay me, quick!

Le bergier

Bee

Pathelin

Bien ca bien
ta beſongne eſt elle bien faicte

Le bergier

Bee

Patelin tries to collect his fee

THE SHEPHERD.

[*Backing off, with a prolonged bleat.*] *Ba-a-a-a!*

PATELIN.

[*Reproachfully.*] Is this mockery? Is this the most you intend to do? [*Growing fiercely eager.*] Upon my oath, you shall pay me, unless you can fly! [*Cornering the* SHEPHERD.] Do you understand? Here! My fee!

THE SHEPHERD.

Ba-a!

PATELIN.

This is a jest! [*With a shade of pathos.*] What! Is this all I am to get?

THE SHEPHERD.

Ba-a!

PATELIN.

[*Half in jest, but persuasively.*] You are riming; but this is prose. Hm! What do you think I am? Are you aware whom you are trying to take in? Babble to me no longer with your *ba-a!* and pay me my fee.

THE SHEPHERD.

[*Growing restless.*] *Ba-a-a!*

PATELIN.

[*Keeping him cornered.*] Is that the only pay I am to get? With whom do you fancy you are playing? [*Regretfully.*] And I was to take such pride in you! Now let me be proud of you.

THE SHEPHERD.

Ba-a!

PATELIN.

Are you trying to feed me on goose? [*Fiercely.*] By Heaven! Have I lived to see myself jeered at by an oaf, a sheep in clothing, a filthy churl!

THE SHEPHERD.

Ba-a!

PATELIN.

[*In gentle reproach.*] Is this the only word I am to hear? If you are merely fooling, say so, and spare me further argument. [*A slight pause.*] Come to my house for supper, Lambkin.

THE SHEPHERD.

[*Glancing at* PATELIN *cunningly; then gives a loud bleat.*] *Ba-a-a!*

PATELIN.

[*Half to himself.*] By Saint John, you are right! The goslings lead the geese to pasture. [*To himself.*] I thought myself the master of all deceivers, but a mere shepherd leaves me behind! [*To the* SHEPHERD, *who is trying to make good his escape.*] You rascal! if I could find a bailiff, I'd have you jailed!

THE SHEPHERD.

[*Dodging about, while* PATELIN *endeavours to head him off.*] *Ba-a! Ba-a-a!*

PATELIN.

[*Trying to get hold of the* SHEPHERD.] Hm! *Ba-a!* Hang me if I don't go after a good bailiff! Bad luck to him if he doesn't put you into jail!

THE SHEPHERD.

[*Fleeing* L. U. E.] If he finds me, I'll forgive him!

CURTAIN

Notes on the Text

Notes on the Text

I

Page 4. "Aye, but he has studied a great while to be a scholar." In the original, Guillemette says: *Aussy a il leu le grimaire*, a derivative of *grammatica* (= "Latin grammar"). For several centuries the superstitious regarded *le grimaire* (English "gramary") as a work having some occult connexion with the Devil. See, for instance, the *fabliau* of *Martin Hapart*, vol. ii, p. 176, in the *Recueil général et complet des fabliaux*. In the *fabliau* of *Le roi d'Angleterre et le jongleur d'Ely*, *ib.*, p. 242, *grymoire* seems to mean "rigmarole." In Rabelais (iv, 45) we read: "Autour de luy estoient trois prebstres bien ras et tonsurés, lisans le *grimoyre* et conjurans les diables." To give in modern speech the exact connotation of *le grimaire* is quite impossible.

II

Page 4. "Charlemaine in Spain." The first verses of the *Song of Roland* state that Charles the Great spent full seven years in Spain.

III

Page 5. "Sliest rascal." Le Roy reads *chaudes testes;* Levet changes *chaudes* to *saiges.* Levet's alteration seems to indicate that *chaudes testes* was no longer clear in 1489, or thereabouts, and had, therefore, to be replaced by a more familiar expression. In my opinion, *chaudes testes* was slang, and meant something not very different from the translation that I have offered. At all events, to think of this wily barrister as "hot-headed" would be to endow him with a characteristic hardly in keeping with his personality as it is portrayed in the remainder of the piece. A dare-devil he is, but self-controlled. It was trickery, not anger or violence, that caused Maître Pierre to spend a Saturday in the pillory.

IV

Page 5. "Silks and satins,"—a rough equivalent of *camelos . . et . . camocas.* Camlet, or chamlet,—to give the English forms of *camelot* and *chamelot,*—seems to have been a thick, wavy material, originally composed of camel's hair or goat's hair, but later, apparently, of silk and wool. "Of fees and robes hadde he many oon," says Chaucer of his Sergeant of the Law, and Rabelais scoffingly mentions "l'avocat,

seigneur de Camelotière," uncle of "le medecin d'eau douce, feu Amer" (Prol. Book v). *Camoca* was probably a silken stuff, also sumptuous.

Patelin's envious thrust at the gorgeously robed lawyers strikes home; for they, as well as the half-starved throng of pettifoggers to which Patelin belongs, were bent upon filling their wallets by hook or by crook. Commines (vi, 5) was indignant at their corrupt practices; generations later they aroused the scorn of Montaigne and excited the sarcasm of Molière.

V

Page 6. "[*Counting on his fingers*]"—the only stage-direction to be found in any known fifteenth-century text of *Patelin*.

VI

Page 8. "Undergarment." The original seems to contain a complicated pun on *blanchet*, which may be taken as the diminutive of *blanc* (English "blank"), a small coin; or may mean "blanket" for a bed, or a "petticoat"; or even be the antonym of *brunet*, the masculine of *brunette*. The actor who performed the part of Patelin was probably made up to look pale (*fade*)

and boozy (*potatif*), as we shall see further on at the end of Act III. If Patelin is both pale and boozy, he is *blanchet*. This farce contains several puns of varying merit; but the reader will pardon the translator both for his inability to do them justice, and for passing them henceforth in silence.

VII

Page 16. "God's-pennies." The system of giving a tradesman earnest-money (a "hansel") still survives; but nowadays we call it a "deposit," rather than "God's-penny," as it was commonly called by our medieval ancestors.

In the Middle Ages it seems to have been customary to give the God's-penny to the purveyor, or to his agent (see Du Cange), as a token of religious obligation to pay the whole debt within a certain period,—not on Doomsday, in the manner of Master Patelin. Often, if not always, the *denier à Dieu* (*denarius Dei*) was dropped into a box somewhere near the church, or either in or near the market-place. There it remained till removed by a servant of the Church. My stage-direction follows closely the tradition of the Comédie Française, and is probably not a contradiction of history.

VIII

Page 17. "The great frost." Presumably, that of 1464. See Introduction.

IX

Page 18. "Saturday." Market-day regularly fell on Saturday. See Note xv.

X

Page 18. "Saint Maudeleyne's day." Magdalen College at Oxford, despite its spelling, preserves the Middle English pronunciation. I have chosen the popular form because of its euphonious nature and its more popular, less sacred air. Saint Maudeleyne's day is the 22 July.

XI

Page 21. "That goose." Patelin says, in the original, "Et si mengeres de mon oye,"—a grimly humorous phrase; for, in the first place, Master Pierre has no goose, and, furthermore, *manger de l'oye*, or *de l'oue*, was a proverbial expression, meaning approximately "to get something not bargained for," or, as we say, "to go on a fool's errand," or on "a wild-goose chase." Imagine the pleasure with which an early audience would have listened to this bit of dramatic irony.

XII

Page 23. "That scalawag," etc. These few words damn the Draper. He makes himself fair game, and his subsequent misfortunes are justified from an artistic point of view, however little they are justified by morality.

XIII

Page 26. "Guillaume." In the fifteenth century "Guillaume" meant not only "William," but also "dunce" or "gull." It would be easy to cite many similar applications of English baptismal names. Jack-pudding, Jackanapes, Tomfool, Willy, Neddy, Johnny (a town fop who haunts green-rooms, or any effeminate man-about-town), Miss Nancy, and Ralph Spooner will do for examples. "Chaque nation," says Montaigne (1, 46), "a quelques noms qui se prennent, je ne sçay comment, en mauvaise part: et à nous Jehan, Guillaume, Benoit." Montaigne goes on to say that at a banquet given by Henry Duke of Normandy the guests were grouped at table according to their names. At the first table sat one hundred and ten knights named Guillaume.

XIV

Page 26. "Let's bind the bargain with a drink." (In the original, Et encore se j'eusse dit

—La main sur le pot.) In various parts of France, peasants and other persons of that class are still accustomed to lay their hands over a "pot de vin" to seal a business deal; but who was to pay the publican? Could Patelin have got any publican to trust him? See page 6 of the text.

XV

Page 28. "That Saturday they put you in the stocks." Saturday was chosen because it was market-day (see Note ix). The prisoner's ignominy would thus be known, not only to his fellow townsmen, but also to the crowds who flocked in from the neighbouring country. Here we encounter, therefore, one of several flaws or inconsistencies in the plot of *Patelin*. Even so dull a fool as the Draper could hardly be ignorant of Patelin's reputation; indeed he calls him a scalawag, as we have seen; nevertheless he trusts Patelin, and actually expects to receive payment and have a bite of Patelin's goose.

XVI

Page 36. "This must have happened since sunrise, then," etc. On page 64 we learn that the trial takes place about six o'clock. In the fifteenth century the hours had come to be reckoned

as they are now. Therefore the whole action of *Patelin* consumes some ten or twelve hours of daylight, and the first great comedy composed in a modern tongue observes the Unity of Time, if we understand that term according to traditional canons. In reality, the imagination needs only about an hour and a quarter to learn a series of events which occupy, with intervals not altogether easy to determine, a period lasting approximately from rather early in the morning till dusk.

Now, as to the Unity of Place. On the medieval stage the various scenes of a story were visualized, not by the shifting of scenery, but by the juxtaposition of all the structures necessary to the performance of a given piece. From the beginning of a play to its close the stage setting remained unchanged. Such, at any rate, was the character of the "serious drama," and there is no good reason for supposing that a wholly different arrangement obtained in the performing of farces (see Preface as to staging). We may assume that on one side of a broad stage stood the Draper's shop, or some structure intended to represent it. On the other side stood Patelin's abode, designated, perhaps, by hardly more than a wall with a door in it (see the woodcut, page 31), and that this door opened upon an area representing

a market-place, or, at all events, a space wide enough to lend some plausibility to the events set forth in *Patelin*. If we grant this to be true, the Unity of Place, also, is observed in *Patelin*. The setting adopted by the Comédie Française is unquestionably very different from that of the Middle Ages, and does not observe the Unity of Place, if by that term we mean one and the same locality completely visible in every scene.

In *Patelin* the Unity of Action is not marred by any irrelevant digression, though certain entrances are too timely. But this same flaw is common in Molière, whose characters often appear on the scene with no better warrant than a "Mais le voilà qui vient," or some other similar phrase. As late as Labiche unjustified entrances are still common; but the most modern playwrights, when they are genuine artists, avoid this defect in dramatic construction.

XVII

Page 37. "Rosewater," etc. In the Middle Ages rosewater was supposed to be efficacious in restoring persons who felt faint, or who had fallen into a swoon. Recipes for distilling this remedy have been preserved by numerous works on medicine.

In his essay "On Three Good Women" (ii, 35),

Montaigne speaks of rubbing the feet as if that had been a common way of restoring life or vitality.

XVIII

Page 37. "Marmara, carimari, carimara." This gibberish seems to parody some weird formula once used by priests in performing exorcisms upon persons supposedly possessed. We have much the same sort of thing in the mild incantation "Ena, mena, mina, mo ! Catch a nigger by the toe," etc., or in "Fe, fi, fo, fum ! I smell the blood of an Englishmun ! " As Patelin is being plagued by "black men," the conjecture that "marmara, carimari, carimara" is a burlesque of some formula of exorcism, seems highly plausible, though these particular syllables may imitate some rigmarole in the patter of fifteenth-century trick-performing mountebanks.

XIX

Page 37. "Away with them ! away !" The ext reads, "Amenes les moy, amenes !" In the so-called *Chronique scandaleuse* (A. D. 1460–1483), and in various other medieval texts, *amener* is more than once used for *emmener*. My translation is warranted, therefore, by phonology as well as by common sense.

XX

Page 38. "A stole." When a priest had occasion to drive away the devil, it was desirable, if not indispensable, that he should use a stole, the symbol of obedience. For a detailed description of this custom, which is still common in the Roman Catholic Church, see my "Exorcism with a Stole," in *Modern Language Notes* for December, 1904, and April, 1905.

XXI

Page 40. "And my symptoms"—in the original: *Et mon orine.* Medieval physicians set great store by the examination of urinal symptoms. A large number of manuscripts treating of this subject have come down, and literary allusions are common as late as the eighteenth century.

XXII

Page 42. "No goose." At this period geese were a luxury not often relished by persons like our Draper, and one may imagine how he had set his heart on eating this delicacy at Patelin's table. See Note xi.

XXIII

Page 45. "A quack," etc. In the original: *Et cest avocat potatif a trois leçons et trois psëaulmes.*

"Three lessons and three psalms." Between the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries the Franciscans began to feel that the Breviary required them to recite too many lessons and too many psalms. So they reduced the number from nine to three,—at least, on certain occasions only three lessons and three psalms were required. In the thirteenth century it became customary in France to recite only three psalms at matins throughout Easter, nor was this easy-going way characteristic merely of the Abbey of Fécamp, as a famous passage in Rabelais might lead us to suppose. "'According to what usage,' said Gargantua [to the monk], 'do you say these beautiful hours?' —'According to the usage of Fécamp,' said the monk, 'with three lessons and three psalms, or, for those who are unwilling, nothing at all.'" (*Gargantua*, 1, 41.)

Before the days of printing, breviaries were so costly that they were often chained to a bench in the choir, and each monk or priest had to learn the minimum by heart. That those who knew only the minimum should have excited the pity or scorn of their more diligent brethren, and that their feelings should have been expressed in such a manner as to give rise to this proverbial taunt, is not contrary to the tendencies of human nature.

The Draper could hardly have hit upon a more ludicrously appropriate phrase to express his contemptuous indignation and his self-esteem.

XXIV

Page 46. "The Abbot of Ivernaux." The Abbey of Ivernaux, or Hivernaux, was situate near the hamlet called Brie-Comte-Robert, which lies some twenty miles southeast of Paris, in whose archbishopric was the Church of Ivernaux. The Abbey of Ivernaux was sadly weakened by the wars of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.

But to what Abbot of Ivernaux is Patelin alluding?

In a lease dated 1441, and in another dated 1451, one Nicolas Bottelin is spoken of as "abbot." Another lease, dated 1461, applies the title to a Jean d' Arquevilliers. Philippe seems to have been the name of an Abbot of Ivernaux who signed a lease on 31 March, 1468.

Whatever may be the advantage of knowing these names,—very barren things at best,—it is worth our while to learn that in 1468, the year before *Patelin* first entered an extant record, the Abbot of Ivernaux was no longer a power, for his abbacy had sunk into poverty; yet even a certain wealth and influence would hardly have

saved the Abbot of Ivernaux from being the butt of Patelin's somewhat lewd jocularity, and we may be sure that our lawyer in his sham delirium was not shooting an arrow at the moon. This abbot was presumably a gay fellow, and a worthy contemporary of Huguette du Hamel, who, notwithstanding her intimacy with François Villon and other reprobates, and although she had been guilty of inciting a hireling to murder, could still hold her position as Abbess of Port-Royal. Yet the real importance of this allusion to the Abbot of Ivernaux is that it seems to show that our farce was composed to be performed in the region round about Brie-Comte-Robert; for it is unlikely that this particular abbot's fame had spread very far beyond the bounds of his abbacy.

XXV

Page 48. "Mere de diou," etc. In this and the following passages of dialect or jargon the translator was confronted by a problem of serious difficulty. Three courses seemed possible: (*a*) to transform *Patelin* into an out-and-out English farce, changing the names of the characters, and transplanting the scene to medieval England; (*b*) to preserve the point of Guillemette's explanations by leaving Patelin's *reveries* untranslated;

(*c*) to adopt the plan chosen by Albrecht Count Wickenburg, who, in his excellent verse-translation into German (Vienna, 1883), leaves no foreign words save the Latin, substituting for the other dialects and jargons certain passages of his own invention, in which Patelin is made to rave, now like a delirious alchemist who talks incoherently of quicksilver, sulphur, etc., or like a dying man who pretends to see the flames of hell, as well as other phenomena unnecessary to mention.

Similar approximations will be found in Fournier's version (1871) and in a later (undated) version by Eudoxie Dupuis. The present translation, however, aims at the highest degree of literality consistent with the use of idiomatic, comprehensible English, and aims, furthermore, to be loyal to what is not merely a farce, but also a document of historical importance. I doubt that the retention of these passages will destroy the reader's illusion: he will probably understand the obscurest of them quite as well as they were understood by *Patelin's* first audience; the others will simply be somewhat less intelligible than they seemed to Frenchmen about 1464. It may be added that the author of *Patelin* has made these passages so long as to render them rather boresome *from a modern point of view;* for,

even if one understands them pretty well, they lack a certain charm which brevity imparts. I have not hesitated, therefore, to shorten them; but a comparison with any fifteenth-century edition will show the reader how the cutting was done. It seemed undesirable to attempt here in the Notes what would be a fragmentary and not very interesting series of translations.

XXVI

Page 51. "But how comes he to speak Norman." Not in the original; added for clearness.

XXVII

Page 53. "Quid." *Qui* in the original. A mistake due, perhaps, to the fact that *d* final in French was generally silent as it is now, and that Latin was pronounced as if it were a kind of French.

XXVIII

Page 54. The original text of Guillemette's speech is corrupt. My translation is based on a temporary attempt at restoration.

XXIX

Page 55. "How do you like me for a teacher?"—in the original, *Avant vous ay je bien aprins.* Fifteenth-century syntax allows a so-

called masculine past participle to go with a feminine antecedent. *Vous* means not the Draper, but Guillemette.

XXX

Page 55. The long stage-direction describes how this episode of *Patelin* is wound up at the Comédie Française. The medieval stage had no curtain, and we have no means of knowing how Patelin and Guillemette made themselves inconspicuous at the close of this scene.

XXXI

Page 56. "THE SHEPHERD." The Shepherd's entrance is too timely. Nothing in the plot warrants his appearance at precisely this instant. Similar unjustified entrances are common in Molière, who, as has been said (Note xvi), often uses some stock formula to keep a character from seeming to blunder in.

XXXII

Page 56. "Someone or other in striped hosen." This was a *sergent à verge*, an officer empowered to make arrests, effect seizures, etc.

XXXIII

Page 58. "By Saint Lupus." The Shepherd's oath is well chosen; for wolves were still a pest at this period. Saint Lupus (Saint Wolf,

to translate his name) was called Saint Leu in Old French. As late as 1633 there was standing near that Noyon which is mentioned on page 83 a monastery dedicated to Saint Leu, who was honoured, also, at Troyes in Champagne.

XXXIV

Page 60. "A dealer." The Shepherd does not name the "dealer"; Patelin, on his side, neglects, or the dramatist, for his own convenience or through carelessness, neglects to have Patelin inquire as to the dealer's identity. So Patelin, on arriving at the trial, is astonished to confront the very individual whom he has himself cheated. The Draper, as we have seen, had lied to Patelin by telling him that his whole flock had perished in the great frost (page 17). That our crafty lawyer should fail to make the Shepherd divulge his master's name seems incredible; it is to this flaw in characterization that we owe one of the most comic features of the trial scene, namely the unexpected meeting of the Lawyer and his dupe.

XXXV

Page 63. "Answer nothing but *ba-a-a*," etc. In the second part of his edition of *A C. Mery Tales and Quicke Answers (Shakespere Jest Books*, page 60), Mr. W. Carew Hazlitt has reprinted

the anecdote "Of hym that payde his dette with crienge bea." In this version the Shepherd is replaced by a spendthrift; otherwise the anecdote is nothing more nor less than a kind of disguised summary of the plot of *Patelin* from verse 1067 (in this translation, from page 59) to the end. Whether this particular anecdote figured in the edition of the *C. Mery Tales* printed by John Rastell about 1525, Mr. Hazlitt does not say. It entered, at all events, into the collection printed by Thomas Berthelet about 1535. Assuming this date to be nearly correct, we may assert that our French farce must have been known in England a century before Rabelais. It was, therefore, not through Rabelais that *Patelin* began to influence English literature.

The legal episodes of *Patelin*, as they appear in the *C. Mery Tales*, might be conceived to occur at almost any time and in almost any country; for no names are given. In *Pasquil's Jests* (see Hazlitt, *op. cit.*, vol. III, pp. 45, 46), of which several editions were printed in the first half of the seventeenth century, we find almost exactly the same story, slightly shortened and with the scene laid in London. The version in *Pasquil's Jests* is derived, presumably, from the earlier English version, and not from the French text. There

can be no question of folklore in this matter: what we have is a loan, made through a literary channel.

To sum up: The last third of *Patelin* was epitomized for English readers in the first third of the sixteenth century. But, to go further, I will venture the opinion that *Patelin*, in one or more of the many editions printed in France and in the fifteenth century, had crossed the Channel before 1500, and it was probably from one of these original texts that some more or less literary person derived his summary. Yet it was, I think, through Rabelais that the wily Patelin became known for the first time to a considerable number of people in England. See Introduction, near end.

Note:—The Shepherd's *baa* should of course be absolutely natural, but should vary in pitch, loudness, etc., to suit the context. A clever mimic can make this bleat extremely effective.

XXXVI

Page 65. "Welcome, sir!" The Judge has no reason to suppose that Patelin has a client, but he knows that lawyer. See the beginning of the piece and notice that the Judge invites Patelin to supper (page 82).

XXXVII

Page 70. "Come! Let's stick to those sheep!" "Sus! Revenons à ces moutons!" cries the Judge, and he coins one of those neat and useful phrases which soon make their way from country to country, entering the every-day speech of persons quite unaware to whom or what they are indebted. In his essay on Marlowe (*Old English Dramatists*) James Russell Lowell says, "But it is high time that I should remember Maître Guillaume of *Patelin*, and return to my sheep." The mention of "Guillaume" indicates that Lowell had read *Patelin*, and that he was not merely borrowing the words "to return to our sheep" from Rabelais. In the first chapter of *Gargantua*, Rabelais says, "Retournant à nos moutons, je vous dis . . ."; but it is likely that the *nos* had been substituted for the less convenient *ces* (a homonym of *ses*) a good while before Rabelais read *Patelin*. Owing to facetiousness rather than to ignorance, *moutons* is usually rendered not by "sheep," but by "muttons,"—a mistranslation which neatly indicates the proverb's Gallic origin.

XXXVIII

Page 83. "Brainless" (Esservelé) figured, I suppose, in some farce or morality no longer

extant. In "Mr. Golightly," "Dobbin," etc., not to mention many allegorical names in the older comedy, English furnishes parallels.

XXXIX

Page 83. Of Jean de Noyon nothing is known save what we may infer from the text of *Patelin*. Assuredly he was a real character, contemporary with the audience for which *Patelin* was first performed, and one may surmise that he was more or less notorious, and that he bore a strong, perhaps a comic, likeness to the actor who first played the part of Patelin. But this is guesswork. Whatever the truth may be, it is highly improbable that this Jean belonged to the noble family having its seat at Noyon; for this family seems to have died out before the fifteenth century; nor do I find a Jean de Noyon among the few Fools whose names have been handed down.

XL

Page 85. Why has the Shepherd remained? Simply to furnish another scene, one of the best scenes of all; but obviously Lambkin had a good chance to escape when the Judge dismissed him. In real life so canny a rogue would not fail to make himself scarce as soon as possible.

XLI

Page 90. Here occurs the first bit of moralizing in *Patelin;* but the Lawyer is not repentant; he is crestfallen at being outwitted by a shepherd: that is all. His chagrin is followed by a touch of anger, yet it is only a touch, and we may fancy a sardonic grin passing over his lean countenance as he looks again at the "sheep in clothing" who has so admirably carried out his own instructions.

Genuine moralizations, such as one finds in the younger Dumas and in many other modern plays, are exceedingly rare in the old French farces.

XLII

Page 90. "If he finds me, I'll forgive him!" These are the last words in all the old editions. They break the Shepherd's promise (page 63), but our dramatist, knowing human nature and drawing it with a sure hand, leaves his work with no weak or awkward ending. It is a skilful stroke to have the Shepherd behave like a man, after he has so ably behaved like a sheep. What becomes of him? We imagine that he continues his misdeeds till, after a while, he is nabbed, brought to book, and, having no Patelin to defend him, is properly hanged.

Notes on the Cuts

Notes on the Cuts

THE edition of *Patelin* published by Génin in 1854 contains inaccurate reproductions of five of Levet's illustrative woodcuts: to wit, the first, second, third, fourth and sixth. But with characteristic whimsicality—or carelessness—Génin borrowed the first and fourth from an inferior edition of *Patelin* by Jehan Treperel.[1] The trial scene Génin got from Beneaut's *Patelin* (A. D. 1490), though he could have copied the original cut in Levet's edition. Beneaut's two almost identical cuts of the trial scene were not made from the block used by Levet, as some writers have stated; for Levet's cut has not the same dimensions as the two in Beneaut's edition.

[1]The Treperel *Patelin*, from which Génin seems to have borrowed his cuts, must have appeared after 13 October, 1499; for its colophon reads thus: *Imprime a Paris par Jehan treperel demourant a la rue sainct iacques pres sainct yues a lymaige saint laurens.* Treperel had been obliged to remove to the above address after the fall of the Pont Nostre Dame (13 October, 1499).

In 1870 Baillieu, "marchant libraire sur le quay des grâds augustins a Paris," to quote his pseudo-archaic colophon, published in the so-called "Bibliothèque gothique" what he apparently intended to pass off as a facsimile, or, at any rate, as a reprint of Levet's *Patelin*. Not only does Baillieu's edition contain many gross textual blunders, but it so distorts Levet's cuts as to give a wholly false impression. In a word, Baillieu's *Patelin* is an imposture and even worse than worthless.

Inasmuch as no one else has attempted in modern times, in so far as I am aware, to reproduce Levet's woodcuts, the facsimiles in this volume can rightly be called the first that have ever been made. They differ from the originals in the respect that no attempt has been made to imitate Levet's paper, or to reproduce the marks of age. Certain imperfections in Levet's cuts indicate, apparently, either that the only known exemplar of his edition was one of the last to be printed, or that the paper was not properly wetted. I may add that Levet's sixth illustration, to judge by the Shepherd's beard and other inconsistencies of drawing, can hardly have been made by the engraver who executed the other illustrations. See the Preface.

The printer's mark of Pierre Levet appears on the first page of his *Patelin*, bearing no date, but printed between Nov. 10, and Dec. 20, 1489, and serves as a frontispiece to the present volume. Levet put this mark in his edition of Villon printed after his *Patelin*, late in 1489.

As to the value of Levet's illustrations of *Patelin*, see the Preface.

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